

Implementing a Hard Stop for Pre-Operative Antibiotic Orders During PAT Chart Review

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Abstract Background Information: Timely administration of pre-operative antibiotics is essential in preventing surgical site infections (SSIs) and post-operative complications. Despite established protocols, missed or delayed antibiotic orders have historically led to increased patient risk and workflow disruptions. The Pre-Admission Testing (PAT) process presents a critical opportunity to ensure compliance before the day of surgery.

Objectives of Project: To implement a hard stop during the PAT chart check process that requires verification of pre-operative antibiotic orders prior to surgical clearance. This aims to reduce missed orders, improve surgical readiness, and enhance patient safety—particularly in high-risk populations such as urology and orthopedic surgery patients.

Process of Implementation: A mandatory verification step was embedded into the PAT nurse's chart review workflow. If pre-op antibiotic orders are missing or incomplete, the chart cannot proceed to final clearance. The nurse escalates the issue to the ordering provider or surgical team for resolution. This hard stop is documented and tracked for compliance.

- Update PAT chart check protocols to include antibiotic order verification
- Train PAT nurses on escalation pathways and documentation standards
- Monitor compliance and report monthly metrics to surgical services leadership
- Conduct periodic audits to assess impact on SSI rates and workflow efficiency

Statement of Successful Practice: Antibiotic Order Compliance: Missed day-of-surgery (DOS) antibiotic orders have dropped to 2%, down from previous rates exceeding 20%. Urosepsis Outcomes: Among post-urology procedure patients, decrease from 4 urosepsis in the month of March to ≤ 1 a month since ensure timely prophylaxis. These metrics reflect a significant improvement in both process reliability and patient outcomes.

Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing: Embedding a hard stop for pre-op antibiotic orders within the PAT chart check process has proven to be a high-impact strategy. The measurable reduction in missed orders and improved outcomes in urology patients underscore the value of proactive, protocol-driven care. This initiative supports a culture of safety, accountability, and continuous improvement.