

Increasing Patient Satisfaction by Decreasing Turnaround Time for Lab Results

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Background Information: In the Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU), patients that need a cardiac catheterization require a sheath, which is a long narrow catheter that is inserted through the femoral artery. Due to the numerous blood thinners this patient population receives, they must remain flat due to their hypercoagulable state. Often these patients experience increased discomfort related to prolonged bedrest which leads to decreased patient satisfaction. Prior to sheath removal an Activated Clotting Time (ACT) level needs to be evaluated until a therapeutic value that has been determined by the physician has been reached. Currently, the practice is for the nurse to draw and send the ACT to the Emergency Department Lab which can take up to 60 minutes to get the results. As a result of the prolonged turnaround time of the ACT, this leads to a prolonged recovery time.

Objectives of Project: The purpose of this study is to increase patient satisfaction and decrease turnaround time for ACT results by incorporating the iStat in the PACU.

Process of Implementation: From August to October 2017, data was collected regarding the turnaround time of ACT results. The data showed that the results were taking up to 60 minutes therefore impacting patient satisfaction. The implementation of iStat training began in October 2017. The nurses in 6 PACU were required to complete a HealthStream module and hands on training.

Implementation Process: In December 2017, the nurses began to utilize the iStat machines that were installed in 6 PACU for the ACT results.

Statement of Successful Practice: Turnaround time for obtaining ACT results went from 60 minutes to 5 minutes after utilizing the iStat machine.

Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing: The implementation of the iStat machine was successful in decreasing turnaround time for ACT results which lead to a timely removal of the sheath. In turn this increased patient satisfaction, patient comfort, and decreased length of stay.