Redesigning the Pre-Admission Testing Process in a Specialized Children's Hospital, Moving Towards a Model of Care Coordination

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Background: Gillette Children’s Specialty Healthcare, located in St. Paul, MN, serves a complex patient population, who often present on the day of surgery, with an extensive list of comorbidities. The complicated pre-op preparation process was deemed inefficient, task focused vs. process focused. Our PeriAnesthesia team was faced with the question - How do you triage with a name or surgical procedure? It was clear we needed a better process and a tool.

Our team met to map out our current processes, illustrating the complexity of our systems and the redundancies that existed. Then we established what we could fix.

An Acuity Tool was developed, using a point system, to help us triage and sort the complexity of our patients.

During design and testing of our new Acuity Tool, we completed a “time study” to help validate the time spent with each chart/patient in our current process.

Based on the patient’s acuity score, we now sort the charts by color and do daily team assignments. We have been able to adopt a care coordination model for our most complex and challenging patients.

“Green” charts require very little extra preparation for surgery.

“Yellow” charts require some extra coordination of care pre-operatively.

“Red” charts are our most complex patients, with many co-morbidities. These patients require extensive pre-operative preparation.

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- We have recently moved the Acuity Tool into our EMR so all providers and caregivers are able to review. This also allows us to carry the information forward to subsequent visits and easily review and update if needed.

- This tool has been incorporated into intradisciplinary conferences to help establish the patient’s complexity and outline criteria for additional PreAdmit work-ups and patient prep.

Additional Finding:

- This tool allows for the entire Perioperative team to have a high-level view of the complexity of the patient.
- The additional information guides staffing decisions, case start times, identifies additional needed resources and improves patient safety.