

Be Part of the Solution, Not the Problem: Improving Nursing Decolonization Documentation

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Background Information: With the advent of electronic medical record (EMR) systems, reviewing accuracy and completion of nursing documentation has become less time-consuming and accessible. Absent documentation leads to a conclusion that the task was never completed. Through the EMR system, nurse leaders created a Decolonization Surgery Report; surgical areas can assess monthly and weekly documentation completion. During a monthly surgical services team huddle, the Director of Nursing displayed that the May 2022 completed decolonization documentation (DD) was only 60%, and the nurses could improve decolonization protocol documentation. The pre-operative team nurses formed a task force that included the pre-admissions unit APRN, the unit clinical educator, the unit resource nurse, and the three pre-op team nurses.

Objectives of Project: The goal of the Decolonization Documentation Task Force was to understand which factors influenced completing documentation of a standardized decolonization protocol on patients scheduled for elective procedures at an ambulatory surgical center and identifying interventions to improve documentation to above 90%.

Process of Implementation: The DD Task Force decided to meet weekly at alternating scheduled lunch times. The process improvement models FOCUS and multiple plan-do-study-act (PDSA) cycles were used to study which intervention provided the best outcome.

Statement of Successful Practice: The most significant increase occurred after the task force's 1st meeting but before any interventions were applied; the data reflect that DD completion improved from 66% to 83%. We surpassed our 90% documentation completion goal 2 weeks after implementing nurse-led initiatives.

Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing: As insurers continue to review adverse outcomes associated with surgical procedures and withhold reimbursement for preventable complications, it is imperative for nursing clinical documentation to be complete and accurate. As reported by the outcome data, successful and sustained results impart a lesson that process improvement is a continuous and evolving endeavor that impacts patient outcomes. As evidenced by the data, the most significant progress occurred once the nurses took ownership of the necessity to improve the patient care process. Additionally, having consistent nursing staff develops a team that is committed to organizational culture. Allowing nurses to create solutions that impact patient care is vital to having successful process improvement.