

MUSIC THERAPY: A PACU EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE PROJECT

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Identification of the problem – Overview: Studies have shown approximately 80% of surgical patients will experience moderate to severe pain, and music during the post-operative period can reduce postoperative pain and anxiety.^{1,2} Controlling pain leads to improved patient satisfaction, improved wound healing, and decreases in hospitalization length and consequently reduction in healthcare costs.⁹ Music therapy is recommended by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality and is scientifically explained by several different theories.^{1,4,6} Orthopedics is often considered to be the most painful surgeries and being common surgery at Houston Methodist Sugar Land Hospital, provides an opportunity for utilizing music therapy.⁸

EBP Question/Purpose: Will providing music therapy in the postoperative period to ambulatory orthopedic surgical patients improve the overall patient's pain experience as evidenced by a reduction in intravenous narcotic use, decreased PACU length of stay, and improved Press Ganey® scores related to pain and comfort?

Methods/Evidence: This evidence-based project was conducted in the PACU at Houston Methodist Sugar Land Hospital. Participants of the project include adult ambulatory orthopedic surgical patients. Baseline data was collected for three months through chart audits to determine total amounts of intravenous narcotic medications administered and total length of stay in the PACU. This data was used as the control. During a subsequent three month period, the same group of eligible patients was identified and offered the music therapy. Following patient discharge, the same data was collected and used for comparisons. Also Press Ganey® scores were utilized for comparison purposes to determine patient's overall satisfaction.

Significance of Findings/Outcomes: Overall, implementation of music therapy as a pain control modality for patient comfort and satisfaction proved to be highly successful. While the patient's PACU length of stay and average Fentanyl usage did not experience a significant change, Meperidine usage and the corresponding Press Ganey® scores did have significant changes with music therapy.

Implications for perianesthesia nurses and future research: Future plans include continuing music therapy in the PACU setting for all patients to ensure favorable experiences while in the hospital. Additional projects may be indicated to observe significance when utilizing music therapy in the pre- and intra-operative settings and departments of the hospital, as well as projects to assess patients reported pain levels with music therapy.