Enhance RN Initiated Family Update in PACU During the Covid Pandemic
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Introduction/Background: ML PACU is a fast-paced unit. In order to meet both patient and family members’ emotional need and decrease patient/family anxiety, prior the Covid pandemic, our PACU usually offer a brief family visitation without disrupting PACU workflow. Literature shows that the highest need from both patient and family perioperatively is the information and communication from healthcare provider.

Identification of the problem: During the Covid pandemic, the PACU visitation has become highly restricted. Therefore, the timely PACU family update via texting message or voice/video call has been becoming crucial to reduce patient/family’s anxiety.

QI question/Purpose of the study: Does education on strengthening communication between PACU nurses and patient’s family during the Covid pandemic would impact timely PACU family update and patient/family’s satisfaction?
The purpose of this project is to enhance RN initiated family update during the Covid pandemic.

Methods: All data were collected monthly from April 2020 to July 2020, which matched to baseline and 3 post data sets. Each month thirty surgical cases were randomly selected from three working days and nurses were recommended to follow a special time frame - texting family within 30 mins PACU arrival and phone/video call within 60 mins PACU arrival.
A variety of focused RN education was conducted monthly.
The QI data on patient/family satisfaction was retrieved from the hospital data dashboard quarterly.

Outcomes/Results/Discussion: Through a variety of educational implementations, the PACU family update either via texting or voice call was significantly increased from pre-implementation month 46.7% to 66.7%, 86.7% and 86.7% post-implementation months consecutively and the update within time frame was improved from pre-month 20.0% to post-months 36.7%, 30.0% and 33.3% consecutively. The survey result on patient/family satisfaction was improved from 50% to 62.5%.

Conclusion: RN initiated in time family update is an important way to enhance communication with patient’s family and improve patient care during the Covid pandemic.

Implications for perianesthesia nurses and future research: With actively update family via texting message and voice/video call, continuing staff education and multidiscipline team coordination, we could strengthen nurse and family communication, decrease patient/family postoperative anxiety, optimize PACU patient care and increase patient/family’s satisfaction.