

# Crossing The Line: Improving Post-operative Care at Discharge in the Community Hospital

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## Background

A needs assessment survey within the perianesthesia department revealed opportunities to enhance the competence of nurses in providing postoperative care and discharge education. Survey results from the perianesthesia registered nurses indicated knowledge gaps that could potentially affect the quality of postoperative patient care, discharge teaching, and patient satisfaction and demonstrated an interest in observing common surgical procedures. Despite receiving adequate patient reports, perianesthesia nurses possess limited knowledge of intraoperative events, restricting their ability to address patient inquiries regarding this phase of care and provide enhanced discharge teaching. Drawing parallels with a study in a pediatric radiology department where intradepartmental shadowing improved interprofessional understanding and overall patient care and employee satisfaction (Hailu et al., 2020), this initiative aimed to address identified communication challenges. Suboptimal communication, potentially stemming from a lack of role understanding among team members, has been linked to sentinel events (Monroe et al., 2021). Given this background, it was anticipated that an OR shadowing program would facilitate a deeper understanding of colleagues' roles and the patient's surgical journey, thereby enabling nurses to deliver more competent, effective and informative patient care and education.

## Purpose

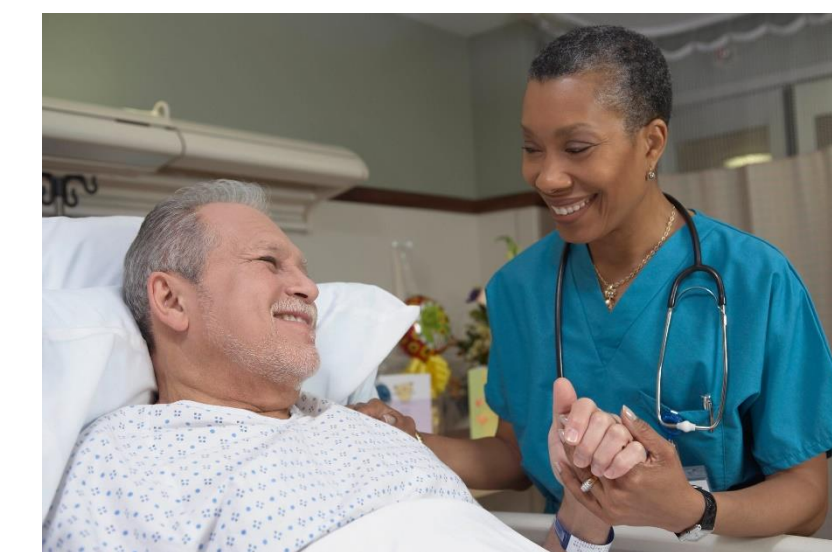
- An operating room (OR) shadowing program for perianesthesia nurses was proposed to enhance understanding of each other's roles, improve knowledge of the patient's surgical experience, and ultimately lead to better discharge education.
- The program aimed to determine if implementing an OR shadowing program for perianesthesia RNs improves nurse competence in postoperative care, patient satisfaction related to discharge education and readmission rates over 3 months compared to current practice.

## Methods

Perianesthesia RNs (n=18) participated in an OR shadowing program for first-hand experience and education over 3 months. Participants shadowed a circulator during six predetermined surgery types that were identified in a needs assessment survey. The validated Nurse Professional Competence (NPC) Scale was administered before, immediately after, and 6 weeks after the shadowing experience to assess nurse competence. Patient satisfaction comments and scores related to discharge as well as 30-day readmission rates were also being monitored.

## Results

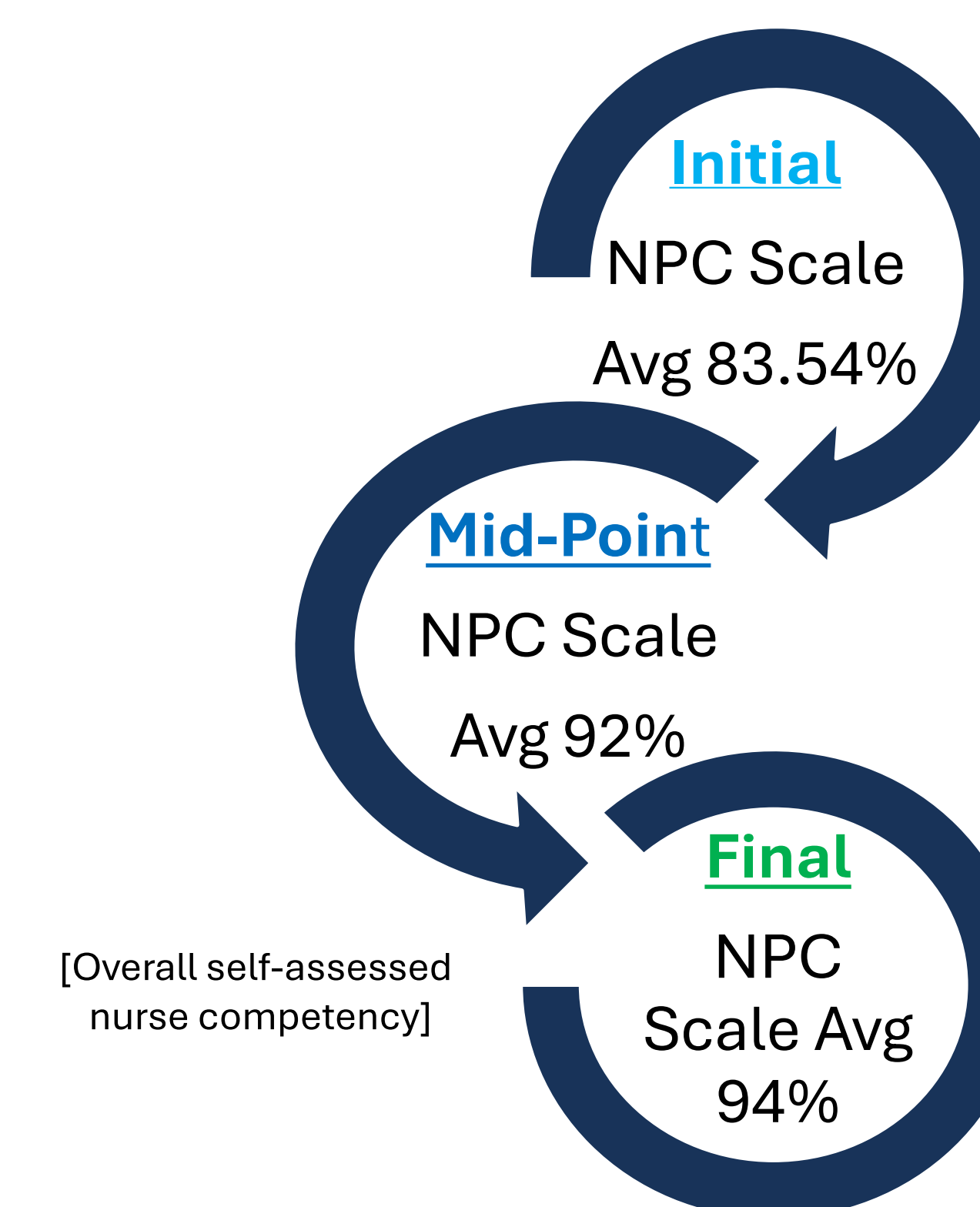
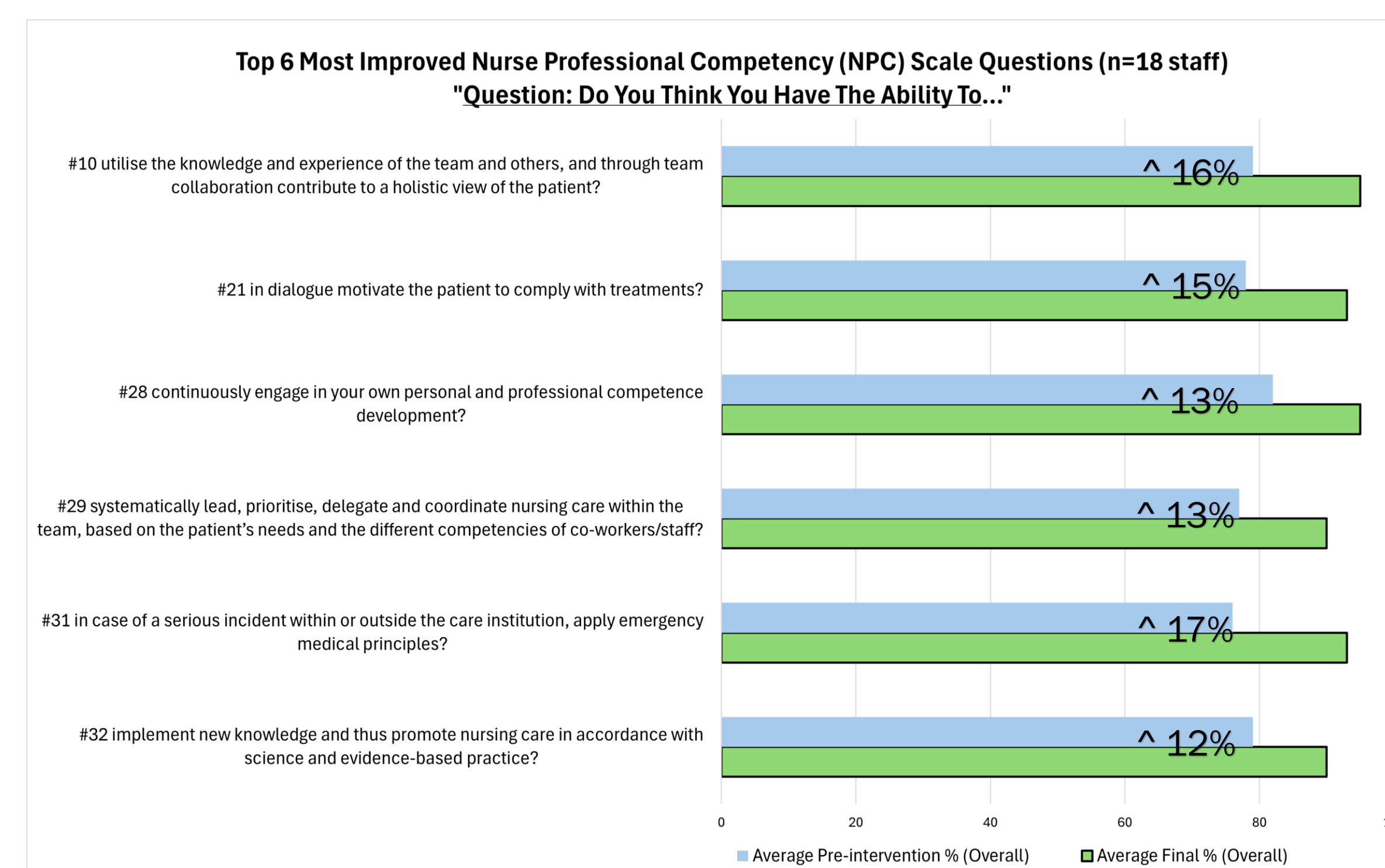
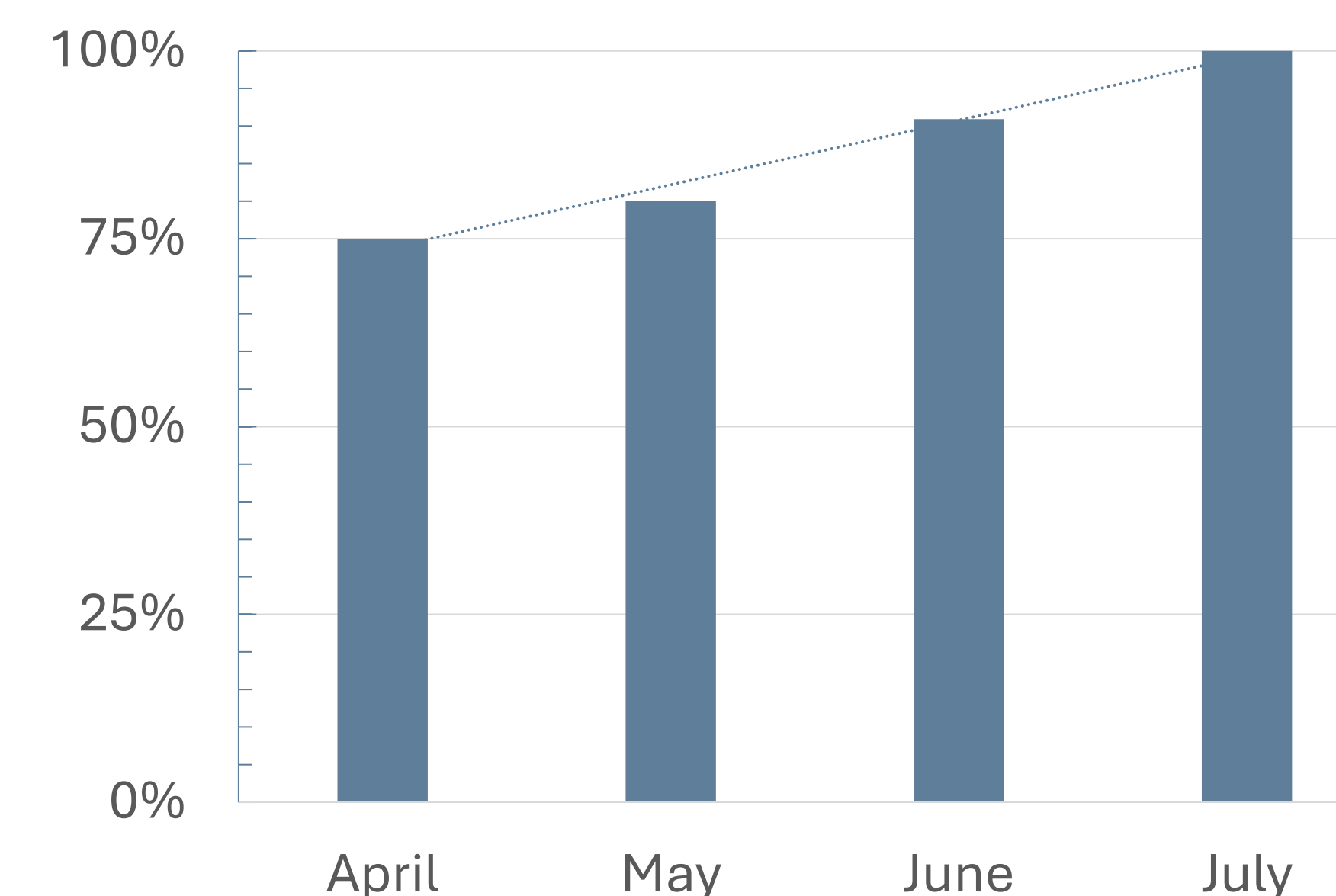
"Nursing was very competent and caring. They were always concerned for my comfort."



"I felt like I was in very capable hands. Their explanation of the procedure during and after surgery was clear. They answered all my questions. I felt they were deeply concerned for my comfort and well-being."

"Explicit direction was given concerning my recovery after surgery; clear and concise."

Press Ganey: Patient Satisfaction on Discharge Instructions Regarding Recovery



➤ 9 Nurses had an overall improved score above the average of the group (n=18, group avg of 10.46% improvement)

➤ 5 Nurses had a final NPC score with an improvement of greater than 20% with one nurse scoring a 30% improvement

## Results

The group's overall NPC scores increased by 10.46% from the pre-assessment (83.54%) to the final NPC score (94%) at the 6-week follow-up. Individual scores increased as high as 30% in some nurses.

Additional results and observations included:

- Positive patient satisfaction comments
- Improved patient satisfaction scores on discharge instructions regarding recovery from 75% to 100%
- Reduction in readmission rates over 3 months.
  - Reduced from 3.06% to 2.04%

## Implications

- Implementing a structured OR shadowing program for perianesthesia nurses enhances their perceived competence. Anecdotal evidence suggests a strong positive impact on camaraderie and communication which impacts hand-off and post-operative patient care.
- Future actions to sustain the positive effects include instituting a program of similar design that allows additional cohorts of perianesthesia nurses to complete shadowing rotations "behind the red line".
- Patient satisfaction and readmission rates should also be monitored for effect.

## Acknowledgments

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Nurse Scientist: Joanne Muyco DNP RN NE-BC CNOR

## References

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