Improving the Quality of Team Communication through Coaching

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Background

- Breakdowns in communication have been identified as the root cause of many medical errors.
- Sentinel events occurring in surgery comprise a significant number of these events.
- Briefings and debriefings, utilizing the WHO surgical checklist, have been added to the operative routine to prevent communication breakdowns.

Purpose

- To evaluate coaching as an intervention to improve the quality of briefings and debriefings occurring in the operating room.

Research Questions

- Is there a difference in the quality of briefings following coaching sessions?
- Is there an increase in the number of briefings and debriefings completed following coaching sessions?

Team Briefing and Debriefing

- Addressing teamwork and communication
- Creating High Reliability
- Minimizing the risk that errors occur or escalate through predictability and repetition

Methods

Pre-Observations Completed by SaferHealthcare

- July-August 2011
- 160 observations
- 57 surgeons observed
- Variety of services

Coaching

- Completed by a retired surgeon with CRM expertise
- 10 days on site in operating rooms
- Additional information sharing sessions with staff

Post-Observations Completed by SaferHealthcare

- November-December 2011
- 160 observations
- 65 surgeons observed (40 in both)
- Variety of services

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Results

Is there a difference in the quality of briefings following coaching?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>#Observed</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-data</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-data</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>.76</td>
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</table>

Is there a difference in the quality of debriefings following coaching?

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-data</td>
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<td>160</td>
<td>2.991</td>
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Implications

- Improving communication in the hospital setting addresses the main cause of sentinel events making the setting safer for patients.
- Coaching was a successful intervention in addressing the quality of communication during the briefing and debriefing in the operating room.