H.U.S.H. Initiative, A Noise Reduction Project
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Results & Planning

Team Turnover

Significance of the Problem

• Noise: “Any sound that produces an undesired physiological or psychological effect in an individual or group” (EPA, 2009)
• “Unnecessary noise is the cruelest absence of care.” (Florence Nightingale, 1859)
• Noise has been reported as problematic according to 50% of patients. (AHRQ, 2007)
• Hospital noise guidelines:
  - EPA - not to exceed 45 dB
  - WHO - not to exceed 40 dB
  - Joint Commission - Noise is a potential contributor to medical and nursing errors
  - CMS/HCAHPS - patient safety environment of care standards

    Noise affects Delivery of Care to Patients
      • Nursing staff would offer noise canceling devices to patients
      • Nursing staff reported at least one patient complaining about noise levels
      • Increased awareness of noise levels
      • Effectiveness of HUSH Initiative

    Noise levels should be as stringent as other environmental standards impacting patient safety.

Implications for Practice

• Use of noise canceling devices, visual cues and staff education are effective in reducing noise levels in the PACU.
• Decreased noise levels will improve patients’ recovery experience and satisfaction with their surgical experience.
• Reduced noise levels will additionally increase nursing satisfaction by providing a less stressful work environment
• Decrease distraction caused by noise lessens the chance for medical and nursing errors
• Noise levels should be as stringent as other environmental standards impacting patient safety.

Patient Survey

• Patients reported benefits of noise canceling devices (iPad, MP3, DVD and Ear Plugs)
  - Noise Reduction 94%
  - Eliminated Boredom 72%
  - Distracted from pain 34%
  - Reduced anxiety 42%
• 100% of patients would use device again and recommend to other surgical patients

Nursing Survey

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Effects of Noise

• On Patients
  - Sleep disruption
  - Stress and anxiety
  - Agitation
  - BP, HR, cortisol levels
  - Impaired wound healing
  - Feeling of isolation
  - Question competence of caregiver
  - Increase need for pain medication

• On Nurses
  - Distraction and interruption leads to increase medical and nursing errors
  - Perceived increase in work demands
  - Stress
  - Annoyance
  - Exhaustion/Burnout

Noise Levels

Pre HUSH
Post HUSH
0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Patient reported noise higher than 4
Patient cited alarm as bothersome
Patient cited phone as bothersome
Patient would Patient would
use noise reduction device use noise reduction device

H.U.S.H Initiative

Noise Sources (PACU)

- Signage
- Staff Education/Communication
- Yacker Tracker
- Noise Cancelling Devices

Patient would like to use device if it HAD been noisy

Average noise reported by patients
Noise level most often reported (1 low to 5 high)
Average noise reported by nurse
Noise level most often reported (1 low to 5 high)

0 1 2 3 4 5 6
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H.U.S.H Initiative

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