

White Boards: A Strategy to Engage Patients in the Plan of Care through Communication

Jennifer Williams, MS, RN, NE-BC

St. Luke's Episcopal Hospital Houston, Texas



Purpose

The purpose of the project was to standardize dry erase boards (white boards) throughout the hospital in an effort to improve communication with patients. Sharing information among members of the patient care team, and with the patient and family, has been found to improve patient satisfaction. The white board serves as a mechanism to facilitate communication and engagement of patients in their plan of care.

Significance

1. Value-based purchasing programs have heightened the need for healthcare facilities to engage in measures to improve the patient experience.
2. Communication with doctors and nurses are two of the nine patient experiences measured for incentive payments under the value-based purchasing program.
3. White boards were purchased for every patient bed in the facility without expensing the operational budget. Monies were donated by the Auxiliary Services Department (volunteers).



Strategy and Implementation

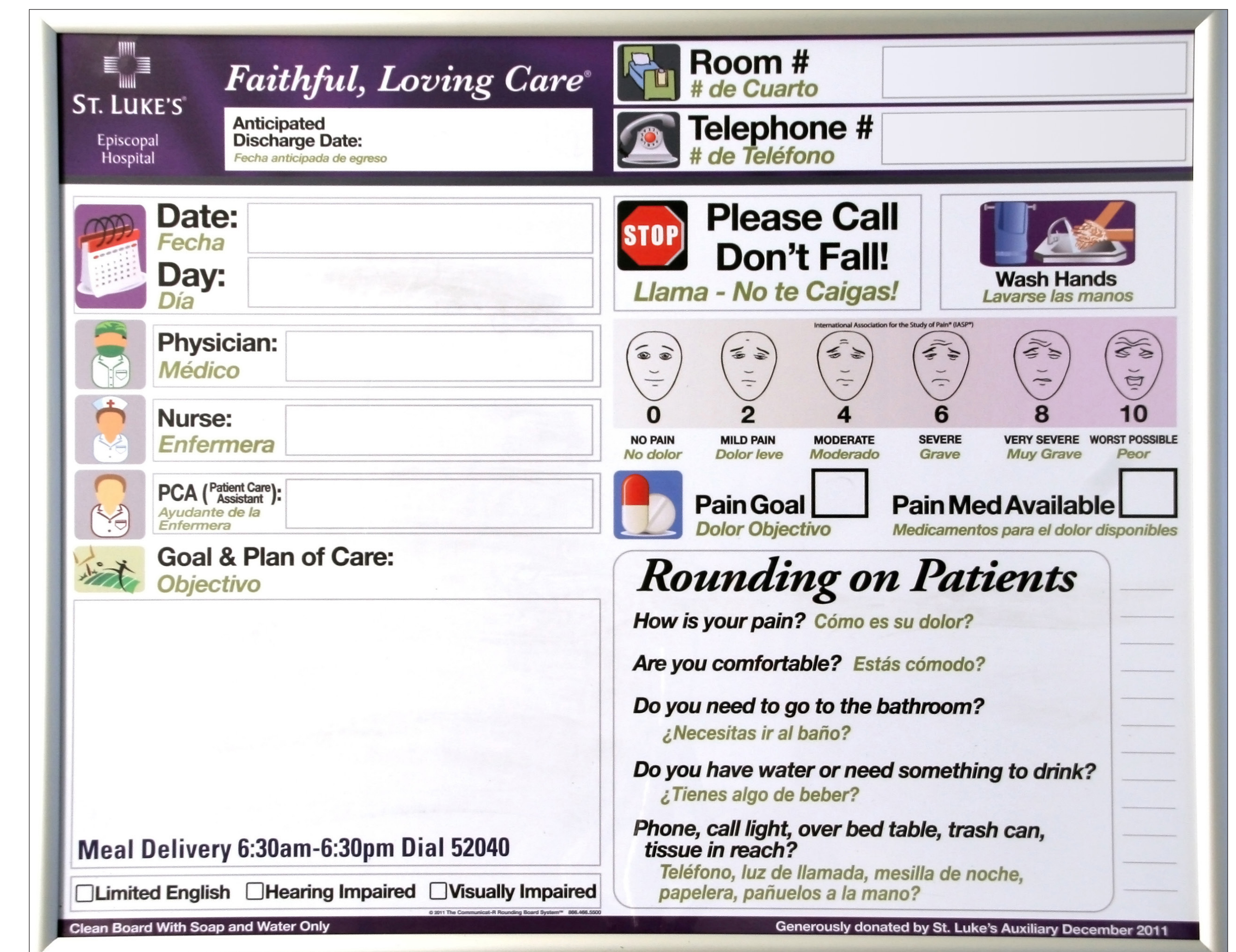
1. The Joint Commission suggests that communication failures are frequent causes of adverse events.
2. Dry erase boards have been used in acute care settings for years for the exchange of information without a standardized format.
3. There was confusion regarding responsibility for the information on the board; keeping it current and relevant.
4. There has been little research on the effectiveness of the dry erase board in improving teamwork, communication and patient satisfaction.
5. St. Luke's Episcopal Hospital embarked on a journey to develop a standardized, patient-centered board designed with the goal of improving communication with patients and healthcare providers.
6. A basic design was developed using key questions from the patient satisfaction survey. Revisions were made based on feedback from patients, families, staff and physicians. The result was a clearly visible and standardized communication board in both English and Spanish.

Evaluation

Communication with doctors and nurses, as measured by a nationally recognized patient satisfaction survey, increased by 2.03%. Several data elements were included on the white board to increase and improve communication with patients, families and the healthcare team, including: hourly rounding, estimation of the date of discharge, pain management, fall prevention, hand washing and patient sensory deficits.

Implications for Practice

1. Focus on key drivers and goals when developing white boards.
2. Use a standardized format across the hospital because patients move around the facility.
3. Involve all members of the healthcare team in the development process.
4. Provide an outline for use of the board.
5. Measure and monitor the level of patient and family knowledge and the satisfaction of care.



ST. LUKE'S Episcopal Hospital Faithful, Loving Care®

Anticipated Discharge Date: Fecha anticipada de egreso

Room # # de Cuarto

Telephone # # de Teléfono

Date: Fecha
Day: Día

Physician: Médico

Nurse: Enfermera

PCA (Patient Care Assistant): Ayudante de la Enfermera

Goal & Plan of Care: Objetivo

Meal Delivery 6:30am-6:30pm Dial 52040

Limited English Hearing Impaired Visually Impaired

Please Call Don't Fall! Llama - No te Caigas!

Wash Hands Lavarse las manos

0 NO PAIN No dolor
2 MILD PAIN Dolor leve
4 MODERATE Moderado
6 SEVERE Grave
8 VERY SEVERE Muy Grave
10 WORST POSSIBLE Peor

Pain Goal Dolor Objetivo Pain Med Available Medicamentos para el dolor disponibles

Rounding on Patients

How is your pain? Cómo es su dolor?

Are you comfortable? Estás cómodo?

Do you need to go to the bathroom? ¿Necesitas ir al baño?

Do you have water or need something to drink? ¿Tienes algo de beber?

Phone, call light, over bed table, trash can, tissue in reach? Teléfono, luz de llamada, mesilla de noche, papelera, pañuelos a la mano?

Clean Board With Soap and Water Only

Generously donated by St. Luke's Auxiliary December 2011