ANTICIPATING NEED: IMPROVING CALL LIGHT RESPONSE ON A MEDICAL SURGICAL UNIT

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Problem Statement: Despite our best efforts, fourth quarter FY2014, resulted in our inpatient unit scores in the first percentile in patient satisfaction for timeliness of answering call lights. In addition, our unit was experiencing staff frustration and exhaustion from responding to 11,000 patient calls a month not including bed/chair exit alarms. A team of direct patient care staff members and leaders met to develop and implement a plan to improve our patient satisfaction scores with answering call lights. We focused our efforts on novel approaches to improve responsiveness to call lights and to decrease the number of calls made. Our goal was to improve our HCAHPS scores to the 50th percentile in patient satisfaction for timeliness of answering call lights and to decrease the number of patient calls by 10%.

Project Description (methods, procedures, approach): In response to unacceptable HCAHPS scores regarding call light responsiveness, a committee of staff members and unit leaders was formed. This committee collected data on the number of patient calls received and mapped staff workflows. After examining the data and the literature, several new methods were chosen to address call light responsiveness, such as blocking assignments, bringing in a swing PCA, and revitalizing hourly rounds. The impact of these interventions on our HCAHPS scores, the data on the types of calls along with the time calls were received as well as impact on staff satisfaction will be presented.

Results: The interventions were implemented early in October of 2014. Our current HCAHPS patient satisfaction score for timeliness of answering call lights has improved to the 90th percentile. During the month of October, the total number of calls received decreased 31%.

Conclusions (including lessons learned and next steps): Preliminary data indicates that interventions have placed a positive impact on our responsiveness to call lights and the total number of calls received. Literature from other hospitals have demonstrated similar programs that decreased the number of patient calls and improved response time. We hope that our data over time, will indicate that our interventions have made a positive impact as well.