PATIENT SAFETY TIPS OF THE DAY: TAKING IT BEYOND THE HUDDLE

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Problem Statement: Mount Carmel Health System is committed to providing a safe patient experience. At Mount Carmel St Ann’s we recognized the need to provide a consistent process for frontline intraoperative staff to actively participate in identifying, communicating and resolving potential patient safety concerns. As a result, in 2012, the daily "Safety Huddle" was initiated at the beginning of each shift. This safety initiative allowed all intraoperative colleagues to start their day with a safety focus ensuring concerns was brought to the forefront before the start of surgical cases. This initiative was quickly hardwired into the daily routine and became extremely successful. It was felt that the team could take patient safety to the next level and have this mindset with every patient interaction during the entire surgical process, not just at the beginning of their shift.

Project Description: As a result, in collaboration with key stakeholders, "Patient Safety Tips of the Day" were developed. The intraoperative team made a conscious effort to identify patient safety concerns throughout their day and discuss them in the moment and during daily huddle. These tips were subsequently compiled weekly and posted on the communication board in the staff lounge and OR front desk, serving as a visual reminder. The safety tips were also exhibited in the monthly intraoperative newsletter which was communicated by unit posting, surgeon lounge posting, and by e-mail to all intraoperative staff including Surgical Services Assistants and anesthesia providers.

Results: The "Patient Safety Tips of the Day" has empowered the intraoperative staff to speak up for patient safety at any time, not just during huddle time, and to put patient safety in the spotlight throughout the patient's entire stay in the intraoperative department. Tenured colleagues, as well as those newly employed, have contributed to the success of the program by role modeling this best practice and identifying concerns in the moment without hesitation. These concerns have been taken very seriously and corrective action has been implemented to ensure that process improvements were put into place to eliminate future risks.

Conclusion: Extending the safety focus beyond the safety huddle has contributed to the culture shift in the operating room creating an environment where it's safe to voice concerns at any time. While staff continues to pursue innovative ways to create a patient safety environment, "Daily Patient Safety Tips" has transformed the staff's daily workflow into continuous safety awareness. As a result, bringing patient safety concerns beyond the huddle has had an impact on the operating room team allowing them to recognize the direct impact they have on their own practice and ultimately providing a safe patient experience.