USING CARING BEHAVIORS TO IMPROVE PATIENT SATISFACTION IN A DAY SURGERY SETTING

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Background: Patient satisfaction scores were lower than desired by the nursing staff of Perioperative Services in a suburban community hospital. The service Shared Governance Committee chose a Relationship Based Care Model (RBCM) as a framework and strategy to aid improvement because it places patient-identified needs at the center of the care model. Nurses might then better address needs or concerns expressed by the patients, and patients participate more fully in their plan of care, which can influence positive outcomes and increased satisfaction. The focus was to identify, communicate and address patient-stated needs throughout the Perioperative continuum.

Purpose: The purpose of this project was to increase patient satisfaction scores in an Ambulatory Surgical setting through the use of caring behaviors by all perioperative services nursing staff.

Sample: All patients admitted to a suburban community hospital for Day Surgery procedures from August 4, 2014-December 15, 2014 were included in this improvement project. A second round of data collection was performed from February 16-27, 2015.

Method: A study published by Carabetta et al in the Journal of Perianesthesia Nursing served as a model for this project, especially in identification of interview questions useful in eliciting patient-identified needs. During routine pre-operative phone calls to patients, nurses asked each patient three questions: “What name would you like to be called?”, “Do you have a special need or consideration?”, and “What concerns do you have about surgery?” Answers were noted on a project document, which was kept in the front of the patient chart, and which perioperative nurses and anesthesia staff referred to throughout the patient’s day surgery experience. Then during phone calls made routinely to patients the day after their surgery, two questions were asked: The first was, " We documented prior to surgery that you were concerned about-----, was this addressed?", and then "Would you describe the nursing care you received throughout your perioperative experience as caring, yes or no?"

Results: Patient satisfaction scores improved 60%, from an overall satisfaction score of 31 to 52, with a sample size of 489. 487 patients described their experience as caring, that their needs were met and that they felt safe. The most commonly stated patient concerns were: surgical outcome, pain control, fear of not waking up, nausea and vomiting, safety and possible loss of personal property such as glasses or hearing aids. Points of dissatisfaction for the remaining 2 patients were investigated and discussed with staff as learning points and further opportunities.

Discussion: A RBCM has been a successful strategy in Perioperative Services for improving patient satisfaction. The patient-centered questions of this study have been adopted as routine parts of pre-op and post op nursing assessments.