

A Unified Approach to Hand-Off Communication
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Problem:

Effective communication has been identified as a challenge when patient care, treatment or service responsibilities are transferred.

Evidence:

Hand-off communication refers to an effective process of passing patient information among caregivers for the purpose of ensuring the continuity and safety of the patient's care.

Strategies:

- a Development of a survey on hand-off communication practices.
- b A handoff process algorithm.
- c Power-point training
- d Around the clock educational sessions

Practice Change:

Implementation of the S –BAR communication model.

S=Situation

B= Background

A=Assessment

R= Recommendations

Evaluations:

- 1 Relationship between communication among healthcare providers with the continuity of care.
- 2 Utilization of a hand off communication form and answering the S-BAR survey question.

Methodology:

A survey of 546 registered nurses completed. Data analyzed using Excel. The Fisher Exact test was applied to determine significance of units that utilized a hand off communication form and the likelihood of answering the S-BAR question correctly.

Results:

Fifty seven percent (310/546) of the survey responses were received. Findings were: 72 % received training; 91% were familiar with the hand off communication, 46% stated their unit had a hand off communication form, of which 84% used the form, 67% were familiar with the guidelines; and 76% felt that the information given during handoff was complete

Recommendations:

- 1 A standardized, automated hand off communication form should be developed
- 2 Present findings to all nurses using various forums
- 3 Integrate discussion of hand off communication into Nursing Journal Club

Lessons Learned:

The respondents that had a hand off communication form were more likely to respond correctly to the question regarding S-BAR ($p < 0.0001$). Responding correctly to the S-BAR question indicated staff's knowledge of the Communication Model S-BAR. A unified approach to hand off communication enhances effective communication among health care providers.

Bibliography

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