What is Going On with This Patient? Radiology Nursing Hand-Off
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**Problem:** Written and/or verbal hand-off processes were not utilized when patients were brought to radiology for testing. Radiology nursing needed to be aware of the patient’s condition for continuum of care.

**Evidence:** The Joint Commission National Patient Safety Goal #2, benchmarking with other hospitals and shared governance.

**Strategy:** A committee of staff nurses from all inpatient areas developed the following two objectives:
1. To identify what needed to be communicated for all patients traveling to the Radiology department and develop an avenue to do this.
2. To identify which patients must have verbal hand-offs between floor staff and radiology nursing.

Realizing the time involved, we enlisted the help of our clinical informatics nurse. Her work group designed a custom printable report that pulls “last documented” pertinent patient factors and active orders to a concise work sheet.

**Practice Change:** After a pilot study and hospital education via on-line mandatory training, the hand-off process went hospital wide.

**Evaluation:** With the nursing round sheet and the transport ticket in place, the needed information is in the front of the chart. Our compliance initially was 70% and currently we are 83%, with our goal being 80%. The number of verbal hand-offs has increased and the number of incidental findings has decreased.

**Results:** We were successful in not only developing a tool for the hand-off of patients in the radiology department but a tool that is now being used hospital wide for any time the patient leaves the unit. Other disciplines have also started using it as a tool in their workflow.

**Recommendations:** In the initial development, include out-patient areas, such as Endoscopy and Dialysis that possibly send patients to radiology.

**Lessons learned:** Communication must be a standard any time a patient is sent off the unit. By empowering the bedside nurse to help develop the tool, we were better able to ensure it was not too time consuming; therefore improving compliance.

**Bibliography:**