Implementing an Evidence-Based Strategy for Improving Patient Safety during Intershift Handoff
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Problem
Transitions in care are a high risk process contributing to medical errors. The nursing intershift report is the process of communicating essential information during the transfer of patient care responsibility from one nurse to another at the end of their shift. Traditionally intershift report can take place anywhere in the patients’ unit. Accountability for the oncoming nurses begins even before a visual assessment of the patient and there is often a delay in patient assessment and prioritization of patient care for the shift along with incongruence between the information in the report and the actual status of the patient often.

Evidence
TeamSTEPPSTM, an evidence-based comprehensive team work system designed to improve quality and safety in health care includes ‘IPASS the BATON’, a tool for handoff.

IPASS Model developed by the nursing leadership team in one of our system hospitals with demonstrated increase in staff and patient satisfaction, 85% decrease in IV site occurrence, 42% decrease in Pressure Ulcer acquired rate and 32% decrease in falls. This model standardized the content and process of bedside handoff and established patient as part of the process.

Practice Change
The nursing intershift handoff is done at the patients’ bedside using the standardized tool ‘IPASS the BATON’. The patients are invited to participate in the handoff and have the opportunity to hear and question the information about their care.

Evaluation
Pre and post implementation measures tracked includes nurse satisfaction, patient satisfaction and medical errors.

Results
Results show an improvement in patient satisfaction and staff satisfaction. Nurses report capture of missing information about patient care. Patients and families find this partnership as a doorway to ongoing communication.

Recommendations
The content and process of Intershift report must be standardized to be at the patients’ bedside with their participation.
Lessons Learned
The process of change must be well planned and monitored. It is beneficial to discuss the reason and benefits of the change and address the concerns before teaching the process of the change.

Bibliography


