Empowering Nurses on Inpatient Mobility
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Background:
Physical therapists provide therapy to inpatients on a daily basis to help restore functional mobility and provide recommendations for patients’ continuum of care. However, little is known about the mobility of patients’ during hospital stay, especially around the time of discharge. Reason being because nursing staff is uninformed on obtaining therapy notes through the facility’s documentation system (Meditech) and interpreting therapist’s abbreviations.

Purpose:
Nursing staff require education to locate and understand physical therapy notes to verify patients’ mobility status. The educational plan was intended to increase nurses’ ability to assist patients with mobility, decrease length of hospital stay and cost of care. Consequently, nurse phone calls to physical therapist would be expected to decline.

Design, Methods & Materials:
Quantitative data was collected in November 2011 in the Orthopedic/Surgical. A survey was developed to discover nurse’s baseline knowledge in locating documentation via Meditech. Second, a call log was developed to establish the quantity of phone calls made to physical therapists inquiring about patients’ mobility status. Third, all nurses in the orthopedic/surgical unit were educated in locating physical therapy documentation and understanding abbreviations via an in-service and handout. Following the education plan, the same survey and call log was conducted again to reveal if the in-service indeed have an impact.

Results:
The results concluded a significant increase in nurses’ ability to locate documentation by 60% and abbreviation comprehension by 30%. Therefore, nurses’ job performance satisfaction increased 10%. Furthermore, a considerable number of calls decreased by 20%.

Conclusion:
Patient mobility is an important factor in determining patients’ function and criteria for progressing to the next phase. Collaborative efforts among staff of the multidisciplinary team are essential to provide safe mobilization of patients in the hospital. Simultaneously, it allowed physical therapists more time for patient care.
Bibliography: