

Quiet Zone!

Improving Noise Levels in Acute Care Settings

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Introduction

HCAHPS scores at UPMC Hamot on 3 South Observation unit reflected 40-50 % patient satisfaction in this category over six months prior to January 2019. Research shows that in a loud recovery area, patients recover slowly with increased irritability and delirium. Also, it decreases concentration of the staff, leading to medication errors and increased stress.

Purpose of the Study: Due to the low HCAHPS scores in the category "Area around room quiet at night" on 3 South, our goal was to reduce the noise levels and improve the satisfaction scores to 65% or higher within three to four months until consistent improvement was shown.

Conclusion

A nurse led education project to improve patient satisfaction scores and noise levels in an acute care hospital setting suggests that continued efforts provided our patients with a more efficient recovery per their standards.

Further improvement may be recognized with a continuation of these efforts on a unit level or hospital wide.

Materials

- Yacker Tracker stoplight device in high-noise areas of the hall
- Bulletin board with education on noise levels for visitors and staff in lobby area
- Tip cards on WOW carts



Methodology

Unit champions gave recommendations and tip cards to 3 South staff, such as close room doors as appropriate, offer ear plugs to patients at night, play the CARE channel for relaxation, plug in and charge equipment to prevent alarming, minimize conversations at workstations, reschedule medications during the night if possible or cluster with early morning work. The maintenance team was also involved in assisting to soundproof the room behind the tubing system.



Results

The HCAHPS scores for "Area around the room quiet at night" on 3 South improved to 67%. Patient satisfaction was achieved during the first two months of intervention to improve noise levels. After four months, 75% patient satisfaction score was obtained, exceeding our project goal of improved satisfaction on a consistent basis.

