Influencing Patient Perceptions: Moving the Bar and Sustaining the Gain with HCAHPS
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Introduction
Staff nurse engagement and participation in the development of any education is essential in order to ensure the opportunity is not simply a cursory review and “check off the box” task.

The goal to improve and sustain medication-related HCAHPS scores was included in the nursing strategic plan. After attending a national conference, several staff nurses proposed the idea of implementing a simple and repetitive teach-back strategy using medication “flash cards”. Integration of health literacy strategies, in this situation the “teach back” method, was accomplished with the help of the patient education council, as this was determined to impact the efficacy of patient education.

A successful pilot program, collaboration with the pharmacy interdisciplinarity team and the nursing education council facilitated a broader roll-out and organizational program success.

These strategies have proven to impact patient understanding and perception of medication education, both raising and sustaining HCAHPS scores.

Organizational Challenges
- The HCAHPS results reporting process is delayed, so course corrections and project modifications were challenging
  - Response: Worked closely with data analyst to evaluate data and provide appropriate feedback to staff and leaders
- Staff RNs are accustomed to providing more lengthy education to patients; the flash cards are simple and pointed and staff often felt they were inadequate
  - Response: Frequent feedback regarding the patient perception of the value vs. the RN perception

Innovative Methods to Influence Patient Perceptions
Simple Flash Cards
- Medication information in standard format at or below 8th grade level
- Using Teach Back
- Nurses received training and follow-up on the “Teach Back” method
- Focus on New Medications
- Nurses prioritized education on new medications; flash cards included the term “New Medication Education Card”

Evaluation
Patient Benefits
- Patients expressed gratitude at simplicity of cards
- Ongoing education prepared patients for discharge

Nursing Benefits
- Consistent approach across all inpatient care areas
- Teach-Back facilitated validation of patient understanding
- Collaboration among many non-related patient care areas and exchange of ideas including strategies for SUCCESS

Organizational Benefits
- Improved HCAHPS data; Patient Satisfaction Scores

References

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