Improving Nurse Handoff Communication with an End of Shift Summary SmartPhrase

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BACKGROUND

• An effective shift handoff for nurses is essential in providing safe and optimal care\(^1,2\)
• Misinformation can lead to delays in care, errors and patient harm\(^1,2\)
• Literature demonstrates that the use of a standardized tool to guide shift handoff improves transfer of information and continuity of care\(^1,2\)

PURPOSE

• To improve shift handoff among nurses on Medical Surgical, Oncology, and Telemetry units at Providence St. John's Health Center
• The current lack of guidelines as to what should be documented in the nurse's end of shift summary results in a wide variation in the content of shift handoff from nurse to nurse

REFERENCES


METHODS

• Cross-sectional survey of perception of communication
• An established scale was used to measure nurse perception of communication “MICU Shift Report Communication Scale”\(^2\)
• The scale was distributed via paper and pencil and electronically

INTERVENTION

• Developed a standardized Epic SmartPhrase for end of shift summary documentation
• Developed with input from bedside RNs, Charge RNs, and management

RESULTS AND OUTCOMES

• Preliminary data gathered from 35 nurses on the Medical Surgical Unit (65% response rate)
• Data shows perceived need for improvement in handoff communication
  • 94% agree the accuracy of handoff “leaves much to be desired”
  • 77% believe their peers do not fully understand the report
  • 37% do not believe the report helps them do their job well

CONCLUSIONS/DISCUSSION

• This intervention is needed to address the perception of poor communication
• Strategies must be implemented to ensure the new practice is adopted
• The tool itself needs ongoing evaluation to ensure all critical elements of a handoff are included

LIMITATIONS

• The measurement scale used was developed for the ICU setting
• Staff turnover between pre and post evaluation