Nurses Improving Care for Healthsystem Elders

NICHE SOLUTION #47 • 2015

IMPROVING CARE TRANSITIONS: USING TELECONFERENCEING TO COMMUNICATE AND COORDINATE DURING TRANSITION OF CARE FOR ELDERLY PATIENTS BETWEEN RURAL ACUTE AND SKILLED NURSING FACILITIES

Author: Wanda Miller, DNP, RN, CENP
Riverside Tappahannock Hospital, Tappahannock, Virginia

PROBLEM: Poorly managed transitions diminish health, increase cost, and cause dissatisfaction in care.

SOLUTION: Use teleconferencing to improve handoffs.

Problem Identified Poorly managed transitions can diminish health, increase cost, and cause dissatisfaction in care. Inadequate communication of patient information and care requirements often exacerbate disruptions in the care of older adults. These challenges can be particularly problematic in rural areas.
Solution Formulated Recognizing the importance of improving transitions, Riverside Tappahannock Hospital and The Orchard, a Riverside skilled nursing facility (SNF), partnered to use teleconferencing to improve the process for handoffs of care.

Strategies used in the initiative included:

- Daily hospital Interdisciplinary Plan of Care (IPOC) meetings included nurses from the SNF via teleconferencing to improve coordination of care
- Face-to-face handoff from nurses at the hospital to nurses at the SNF using the 5-P handoff tool. Patients and families are included as active participants in this process.

5P Handoff Tool
Patient Information
Plan of Care
Purpose/Desired Outcome
Precautions
Problems/Systems Assessment

NICHE Role The NICHE Geriatric Resource Nurse (GRN) core curriculum is designed for use by those at NICHE sites who train nurses in best practices for hospitalized older adults. GRNs are the foundation of system-wide improvement to achieve positive outcomes for hospitalized older adults. The NICHE program, available to hospitals internationally, offers evidence-based, interdisciplinary approaches to promote improved care for the hospitalized older adult. GRNs can perform assessments similar to the one described in this Solution story to understand the characteristics of the older adults at their hospitals.

Evaluation/Results A survey of staff from both facilities showed improved communications and satisfaction in the care for transitioning patients. There was a documented decrease in the number of adverse events related to poor handoffs between the facilities.

Survey results following teleconferencing initiative:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Percentage Agreed</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The patient information in the handoff report was accurate</td>
<td>70% strongly agreed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The patient information in the handoff report was complete</td>
<td>58% strongly agreed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The handoff report conveyed information to the receiving nurse that enabled him/her to give exceptional care to the patient</td>
<td>56% strongly agreed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The handoff report presented an accurate picture of the patient’s condition</td>
<td>56% strongly agreed</td>
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For more information

NICHE-related resources
3. NICHE Organizational Strategies: Canada - ED - Transition of Care and Medication Reconciliation. (Available at NICHE Knowledge Center, accessed via www.nicheprogram.org)
4. NICHE Online Connect Webinar: Crossing the Continuum of Care – Creating New Partnerships. (Available at the NICHE website, accessed via www.nicheprogram.org)

About NICHE
NICHE (Nurses Improving Care for Healthsystem Elders) is an international program designed to help hospitals and healthcare organizations improve care of older adults. The vision of NICHE is for all patients 65-and-over to be given sensitive and exemplary care. The mission of NICHE is to provide principles and tools to stimulate a change in the culture of healthcare facilities to achieve patient-centered care for older adults. NICHE, based at NYU College of Nursing, consists of hospitals and healthcare facilities in the U.S., Canada and Bermuda. For more information visit nicheprogram.org.

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