

**Abstract Title:** Educate Before You Medicate: Increase patient satisfaction and HCAHPS scores.

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**Purpose and Rationale:** To improve patient satisfaction by enhancing communication about new medications as evidenced by increased HCAHPS scores. A 2015 internal patient survey done revealed that only 46% of hospitalized patients reported being informed about new medication side effects. Overall, patients reported feeling overwhelmed with information upon discharge and lacked a comprehensive understanding of their new medications. Initial review of the current practice of educating patients revealed an absence of unity in the delivery methods for new medication information.

**Research Questions:** Will the education provided to the patients improve patient satisfaction and HCAHPS score?

**Synthesis of Review of Literature:** Effective communication of medication purpose and side effects directly influences patients satisfaction with their overall care. Research indicates that patients desire information about their medications and if they have a clear understanding, they are less likely to be readmitted.

**Methods/Procedures:** An inter-professional medication task force was assembled, including a former patient to gain an accurate patient perspective. Strategies were devised to standardize communication and patient medication education.

The task force's plan for helping nurses identify new medications was created by standardized scripting for nurses to recite during bedside medication administration. The script refines communicating new medications prescribed to patients throughout hospitalization and upon discharge. It also incorporates a teach back method. To enhance accessibility, the script is printed on laminated cards and attached to each computer in specified patient care areas. To establish trust, nurses were advised to open the pill packaging in the patient's presence; ensuring safety and facilitating an opportunity for communication.

The pharmacist collaborated with physicians to identify the top 10 medication classifications prescribed on each unit. Medication information cards were created for the corresponding medication classifications. The former patient serving on the task force provided invaluable and unique guidance in the design of the medication card system. Nurses determined the cards should be visible in each patient's room to facilitate communication and reinforce education. A

standardized front title card ensures patient privacy. All of the patient's cards are sent home upon discharge. Various strategies were used to educate staff. SBAR email communication was sent to nurses and physicians, a resource RN was designated for each unit, several presentations were done and continuing education was reinforced during safety huddles. A medication audit tool was developed.

**Results:** Over a three month period, an increase in HCAHPS scores was noted. The question asking patients about identifying purpose of medication increased by 9,2% and the question asking patients if staff describe medication side effects, increased by 8.7%.

**Discussion/Application to Practice:** Empowering the patient with accurate and succinct information about new medications increases patient satisfaction and trust between patients and medical professionals. Additionally, these changes in medication education provide support tools for patients, resulting in increased HCAHPS scores.