Patient Perception of COVID Safety During Hospital Encounter for Elective Joint Replacement Surgery: A Pandemic Survey Process

**Authors:** Sherry Stohler, MSN, RN; (sherry.stohler@hhchealth.org) Carol Ghergurovich MS, RN, NEA-BC; Beth Briglia, MSN, RN, ONC; Nicole Hall, BSN, RN; Iva Brinley, MBA; Charles Johnson, BSN, RN; Betsy Martin, BSN, RN; Matthew Solomito, PhD

**PURPOSE**
Assess elective total joint arthroplasty patients' perception of hospital COVID safety practices following resumption of elective surgery by surveying patients weekly and providing feedback to clinical staff and leadership. In addition, an assessment of surgical case volume reaching normal levels was correlated with this data.

**BACKGROUND**
- New York City became the Epicenter for this disease between March-May 2020.
- Patient awaiting arthroplasty surgery in the northeastern US expressed a higher level of concern for becoming infected with COVID-19 than patients in other regions of the United States.
- An extensive COVID safety protocol was implemented following local, national and industry guidance in anticipation of the announcement of a re-opening date for elective surgical procedures.
- Prior to re-opening, screening upon entry, signage and reinforcement of masking, social distancing and hand hygiene were emphasized.
- Inpatient adherence and reminding patients to wear masks was monitored with immediate corrective feedback provided.

**METHODS**
- A post-operative transition telephone survey was already in place prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The survey was enhanced with two COVID safety questions to assess:
  1. To what extend do you feel that the BJI staff kept you safe and free from COVID exposure? 5-point Likert scale: poor-excellent
  2. Do you have any suggestions for improving this process?
- Survey data was collected and analyzed weekly from May 11, through December 31, 2020 for total joint replacement patients transitioning home following surgery.
- Each week, data was collated, trended and shared with the leadership and clinical teams with an emphasis on specific improvement strategies.
- Leadership rounds augmented compliance with recommended changes.

**RESULTS**
- Between May11-December 31, 2020:
  - 1515 patients completed surgery at BJI.
  - 1,264 (91.1%) patient completed the Transition phone call surgery.
  - 57.2% were Female.
  - Age range: 26-92 years, Average Age: 68.2 years.
- Throughout the study period, patients rated their environment as very good to excellent with respect to COVID safety.

**REFERENCES**

**VOICE OF THE PATIENT: COVID SAFETY RESPONSES**
**Week of June 8, 2020**

**Positive Comments**
- I didn't feel at risk at all. I wasn't scared or nervous. Everyone was thorough with masks and gloves.
- Everyone was wearing masks. Really watched what everyone was doing and touching. I felt safe.
- Every time they came in with masks. I had my mask on.
- Everybody was always using their PPE. There was someone coming by at least once or twice a day to wipe down the rooms.
- Everyone was well aware and right on target with that. I didn't feel like I was in danger at all.

**Opportunities**
- I was surprised that not everyone was wearing an N95 mask. I don't know what the guidelines are, but I felt safe.
- They could have wiped down the commonly used items more, like the walkers.

**METHODS**
- A post-operative transition telephone survey was already in place prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The survey was enhanced with two COVID safety questions to assess:
  1. To what extend do you feel that the BJI staff kept you safe and free from COVID exposure? 5-point Likert scale: poor-excellent
  2. Do you have any suggestions for improving this process?
- Survey data was collected and analyzed weekly from May 11, through December 31, 2020 for total joint replacement patients transitioning home following surgery.
- Each week, data was collated, trended and shared with the leadership and clinical teams with an emphasis on specific improvement strategies.
- Leadership rounds augmented compliance with recommended changes.

**RESULTS**
- Between May11-December 31, 2020:
  - 1515 patients completed surgery at BJI.
  - 1,264 (91.1%) patient completed the Transition phone call surgery.
  - 57.2% were Female.
  - Age range: 26-92 years, Average Age: 68.2 years.
- Throughout the study period, patients rated their environment as very good to excellent with respect to COVID safety.

**REFERENCES**

**VOICE OF THE PATIENT: COVID SAFETY RESPONSES**
**Week of June 8, 2020**

**Positive Comments**
- I didn't feel at risk at all. I wasn't scared or nervous. Everyone was thorough with masks and gloves.
- Everyone was wearing masks. Really watched what everyone was doing and touching. I felt safe.
- Every time they came in with masks. I had my mask on.
- Everybody was always using their PPE. There was someone coming by at least once or twice a day to wipe down the rooms.
- Everyone was well aware and right on target with that. I didn't feel like I was in danger at all.

**Opportunities**
- I was surprised that not everyone was wearing an N95 mask. I don't know what the guidelines are, but I felt safe.
- They could have wiped down the commonly used items more, like the walkers.