Oral Defense Announcement
University of Missouri – St. Louis Graduate School

An oral examination in defense of the dissertation for the degree
Doctor of Nursing Practice with an emphasis in Adult-Gerontology Nurse Practitioner

Matthew Kahmann

Bachelor of Science in Nursing, University of Missouri-St. Louis, 2018
Bachelor of Health Sciences, University of Missouri-Kansas City, 2017

Impact of a Standardized Handoff Tool Between Gastroenterology and PACU Nurses'Communication and Satisfaction

Date: July 12, 2023
Time: 9:45 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.
Place: Seton Lower-Level Classroom 2

Abstract
Problem: Patient handoff between nurses is a critical moment where it is imperative complete and accurate information is exchanged. Handoff of patient information can be complex, and the use of unstructured, non-standardized handoffs could result in poor communication leading to the omission of pertinent information and a decrease in patient safety and staff satisfaction. Several studies have found the use of standardized handoff tools improve communication, decrease omission of critical information, and improve staff satisfaction. While the use of standardized handoff tools is best for patient handoff and safety, there still appears to be a gap in utilization in some areas of nursing.

Methods: This quality improvement project utilized a descriptive observational design. Development of a new GI specific handoff tool was designed after obtaining feedback from both GI and PACU staff and reviewing the current handoff tool. Pre-implementation and post-implementation staff survey data were compared to determine if perceived communication and nursing satisfaction improved in relation to the application of the new handoff tool. Completion rates for items on the new GI handoff tool were also calculated.

Results: Descriptive statistics, Fisher Exact tests, and two-tailed Mann-Whitney tests were utilized to determine statistical significance between staff surveys. No statistical significance was determined in the GI responses for either communication or satisfaction surveys. Two questions were found to be statistically significant in the PACU responses from the communication survey and one question was found to be statistically significant from the satisfaction survey. There was one question that was statistically significant in the combined staff surveys. The documentation completion rates for the most part either met or exceeded the 90% completion rate. One documentation item did not meet the 90% completion rate.

Implications for Practice: The implementation of the new standardized handoff tool did show improvement in the perceived communication and satisfaction with PACU nurses. No statistical improvement was shown with GI nurses, but there should be continued education on the use of the new standardized handoff tool. Almost all of the documentation items were identified correctly indicating a beneficial aspect of the new handoff tool.

Defense of Dissertation Committee
Susan Dean-Baar, PhD, RN, CENP, FAAN - Chairperson
Jennifer Vines, DNP, RN
Kristen Blochlinger, MSN, RN