Improving the Patient Experience in the Hematology/Oncology Procedure Suite by Addressing Patient Flow, Communication, and Staffing

**PURPOSE**
The purpose of this scholarly project was to analyze opportunities to improve patient and staff satisfaction in a Hematology/Oncology procedure suite by using interventions to improve patient flow, communication, and staffing.

**BACKGROUND**
The complexity of care in outpatient procedure areas, combined with a fast pace may contribute to delays and dissatisfaction. Shorter wait times and increased communication of delays are associated with improved patient experience as measured by patient satisfaction scores.

**METHODOLOGY**
The project followed the Logic Model for change and improvement. Baseline data before project implementation suggested a need for improvement in the current process using three interventions. The implemented interventions included a designated waiting area, changing the staffing model to include a Medical Assistant (MA), and improving communication of delays. Press Ganey indicator on “moving through your visit” served as proxy for the patient experience.

Staff questionnaires were provided to assess staff satisfaction.

**RESULTS**
The median time for patient wait time from the clinic to the PACU procedure area was significantly reduced from 3 hours and 15 minutes to 2 hours and 45 minutes after the staffing modifications were implemented (p<0.001); the median time decreased from 3 hours and 15 minutes to 2 hours and 55 minutes after a designated waiting area was assigned (p<0.002); and the median wait time was reduced and additional 45 minutes after the staff communication enhancements for patients/families was initiated (p<0.001). Staff missed meals indicated a 75% improvement after interventions. Press Ganey indicator “moving through your visit” increased from 80.1% to 82.4%, which is above the goal of 80.2%. Staff satisfaction levels also improved after the interventions as indicated by responses to the questionnaire.

**IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE**
Improvement of patient flow, communication of delays, and staffing model in procedure suites can have a positive impact on the patient experience and staff satisfaction. This positive impact can improve health care and outcomes.