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Implementation of a Procedure Acuity Documentation Tool to Improve Charge Capture and Operating Room Revenue

PURPOSE

The purpose of this quality improvement project was to implement a nurse-driven acuity documentation tool to standardize charge capture. The project was intended to improve operating room revenue by the usage of a documentation tool in the adult reconstructive plastics surgery population.

BACKGROUND

The project was implemented in the surgical services department of a Level 1 academic center in the Texas Medical Center, Houston, Texas. The operating room within the surgical service department performs complex invasive procedures resulting in the need for additional staffing, equipment, and supplies, which require accurate nursing documentation to capture patient charges. The lack of acuity documentation intraoperatively and verification of procedure charges in the intraoperative record was causing inadequate charge capture, leading to lost revenue.

METHODOLOGY

A nurse-driven acuity documentation tool was created mimicking an electronic acuity procedure tool. The project team was taught how to use the tool prior to implementation.

The Prosci ADKAR model was used to plan and implement the quality improvement project. The Institute for Healthcare Improvement's Plan-Do-Study-Act model was used to guide and implement change.

RESULTS

Implementation of a procedure for intraoperative charge capture including accurate nurse-driven acuity documentation can prevent lost revenue.

IMPLICATIONS

Nurse Executives will need to implement measures to accurately capture surgical procedure charges. Leaders should consider improvements in the documentation of intraoperative acuity levels to support charge capture, reduce the need for later acuity score modifications, and prevent lost revenue.