

## Implanted Venous Port Education Sets Sail in the ED

Nicole Hebert, MSN, RN, CNL, CEN—Advanced Nurse Clinician, Emergency Services  
 Darcy Abbott, MSN, RN, CEN—Interim Chief Nursing Officer  
 Sherri Sprague, BSN, RN—Director, Emergency Services

### Purpose

Patient feedback prompted us to evaluate our nursing competency for implanted venous ports

With a limited IV team and increasing patient demand, the Emergency Department (ED) needed more nurses skilled to access ports

Using an interdisciplinary approach and staff engagement, we determined knowledge gaps, barriers to practice, modernized the education program for ED nurses, while keeping access to care, patient safety and satisfaction on the forefront

### Design

A staff development and quality assurance project

### Setting

A teaching, suburban 359-bed, non-profit acute care hospital with 70,000 Emergency Department visits per year and an outpatient Infusion Suite on campus

### Participants

20 ED nurses participated in a voluntary questionnaire, sampling educational topics for an annual education fair

83 ED nurses were provided education on Implanted Venous Ports based on professional evidence-based standards and guidelines for implanted port care

#### Contact Information

Nicole Hebert—[nhebert@kentri.org](mailto:nhebert@kentri.org)  
 Darcy Abbott—[dabbott@kentri.org](mailto:dabbott@kentri.org)  
 Sherri Sprague—[ssprague@carene.org](mailto:ssprague@carene.org)

### Methods

At the beginning of this project, 18% of nurses (n= 14) were certified to access ports. Of that, half worked per-diem

A patient feedback interdisciplinary group determined that: the number of port certified ED nurses was insufficient; the education process for nurses was lengthy and daunting; and a list of certified nurses was unattainable for staff. Additionally, nursing staff was asked to suggest topics for an education fair: Accessing ports was a recurring theme

Following a knowledge-to-action framework, the ED nurse educator worked collaboratively with port certified staff and the IV/Infusion nurse manager to upgrade the educational material and competency checklists

- A computer-based learning (CBL) program, video, and 5 question test was developed, utilizing evidenced-based standards of practice
- Successful port access/de-access demonstration on a mannequin at the education fair provided staff with a checklist, requiring 2 additional port access under real-time conditions to complete the certification process
- ED staff already port certified served as unit champions and observed nurses during the process



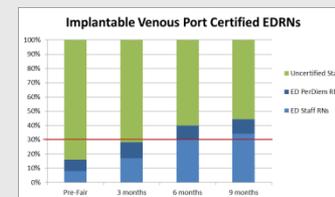
Two evaluation tools using a Likert-like scale, were given to all nurses upon exiting the fair and to those who returned a completed checklist. Both assessed: knowledge, effectiveness of teaching method, applicability to practice, and confidence in applying knowledge to practice

- 69 nurses attended the education fair; 59 returned evaluations
- 25 nurses completed their checklists; 21 returned the final evaluation
- Our goal was to achieve 30% certified nurses within 6 months following the fair

### Results/Outcomes

Post-fair evaluation score was 4.17; following checklist completion, scores increased to 4.72 (scale 0-5)

- In the first 2 months, the percentage of staff nurses certified to access ports increased by 128%
- 44% of nurses are now certified (n=39); only 9 work per-diem



- The hospital has maintained Zero CLABSI post-implementation of the project
- A list of all RNs certified to access ports was created and uploaded into the hospital-wide resource database
- All new ED nurses are enrolled into the Implanted Port education program upon hire.

### Implications

Implanted ports are the most common central vascular access device and are an important provision of supportive care for cancer patients presenting to the ED for treatment

Timely delivery of intravenous fluids, medications, and/or blood products is essential in emergency care

This project incorporated themes of interdisciplinary collaboration, communication, shared governance, and evidence-based practice. It will undoubtedly enhance the delivery of safe, quality patient care to this special population