

Waiting Room Nurse: Enhancing Patient Safety and Experience

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Background

Nearly half of Emergency Departments (ED) across the country are experience crowding, which has attributed to decreased quality of care; current workflows for reassessments are not optimal towards identifying threats and poorly affecting the patient experience (“Section 1. The Need to Address Emergency Department Crowding,” 2018). Innes, et al. (2017), discusses the impact of a waiting room nurse role to improve decreased waiting times and improve risk mitigations.

Purpose

Our two goals were to enhance detection of clinical deterioration and improve the patients’ experience while in the waiting room by implementing a Waiting Room (WR) nurse, as well as ensuring the feasibility and acceptability of the new role among staff.

Methods

We initiated a dedicated WR nurse from 11/1/2018 to date with 22 hour coverage. We evaluated three elements: (fig. 1) Screened and Left Rates (SAL), (fig. 2) Volunteer Rounding Data on patients in the WR “While in the WR, how many times were you updated about your plan of care?”. (Table 1) All emergency department staff perceptions of the quality of patient interactions and the overall mood of the WR via a pre/post 5-item Likert survey (1-negative to 5- positive) WR nurse “wins” perceived on patient safety or experience.

Implications

Our role was implemented using current staffing projections and did not require an additional full time employee. Despite known staff resistance to implementing a WR nurse in our department, this pilot demonstrated a benefit to patient care while improving the perceptions from staff that implementing this role positively influenced positive patient experience and provides a layer of risk mitigation.

Results

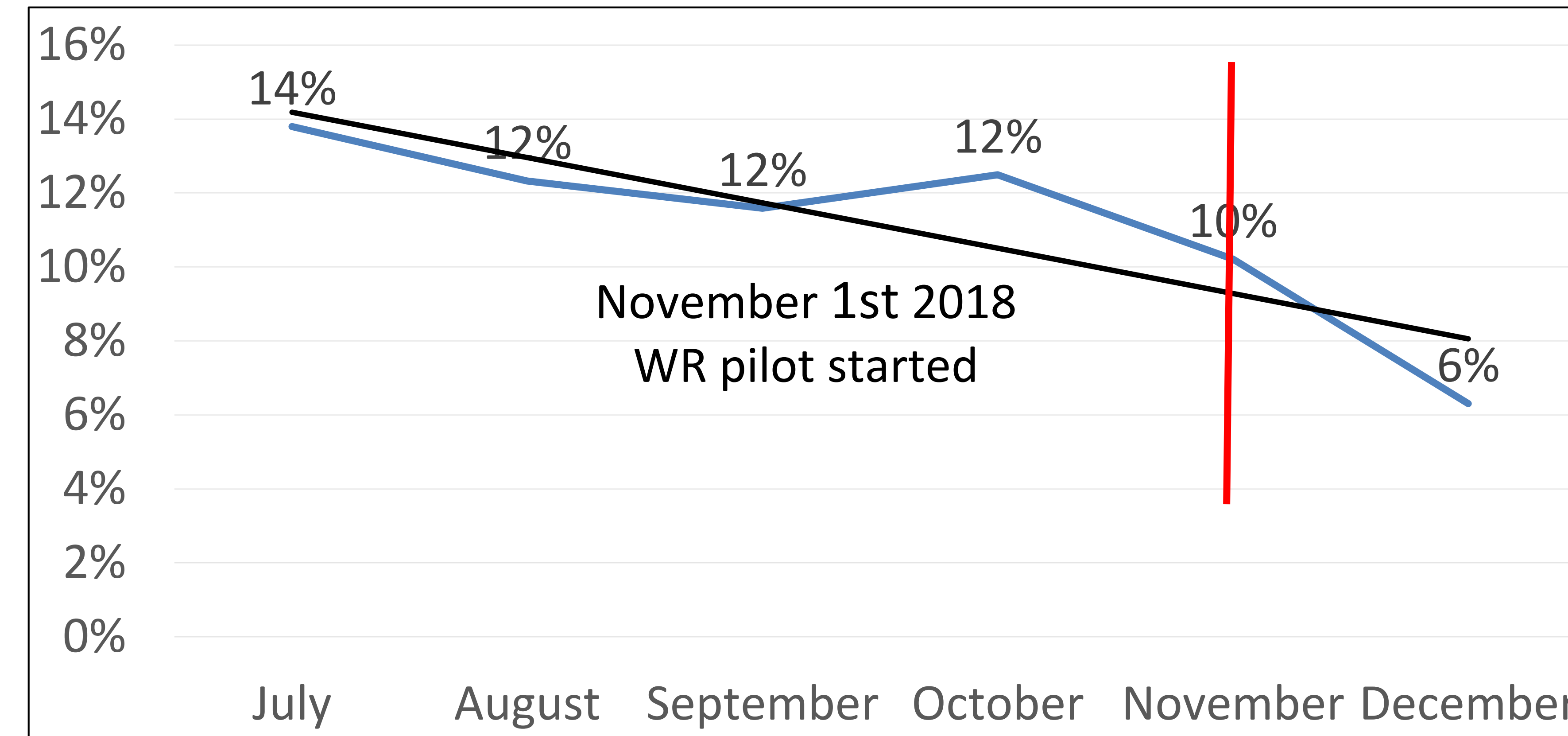


Figure 1 Screened and Left Rates

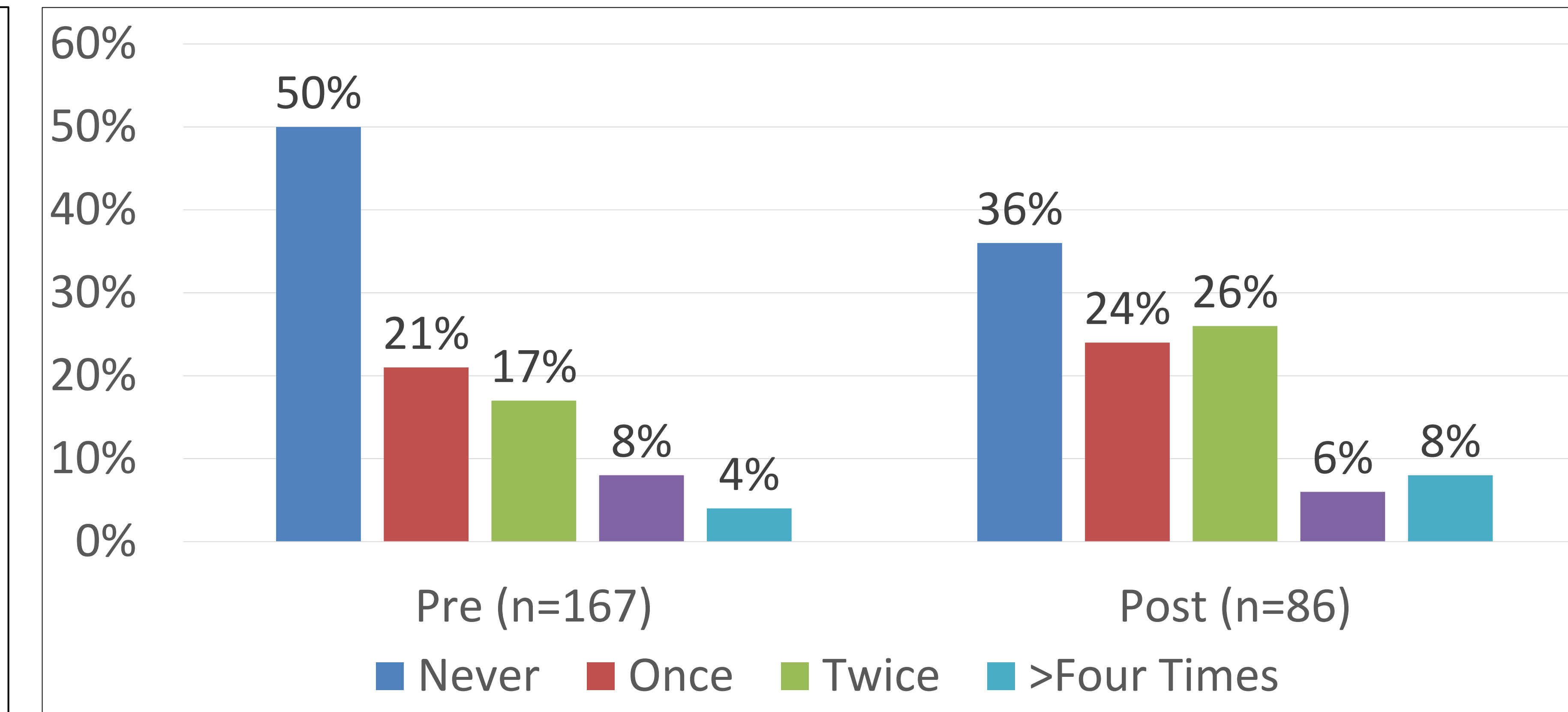


Figure 2 Responses to the question ‘while in the WR, how many times were you updated about your plan of care?’

	Pre-implementation (n=20)	Post-implementation (n=50)
When patients come up to you from the waiting room, how do you feel the interactions were?	1.3 (somewhat negative)	3.7 (somewhat positive)
Rate the overall mood of patient's experience in the waiting room:	1.4 (extremely dissatisfied)	3.6 (somewhat satisfied)

Table 1 Staff perceptions regarding WR experience as expressed in 5 point likert scale (Quantitative)

Waiting Room Wins

“Multifocal Pneumonia patient with severe sepsis (lactate 3) that was in the waiting room and identified to the clinical team to help expedite treatment. Provider then came up to talk to patient and ultimately patient was able to get cultures and antibiotics.”

Fall: “Patient had a missed triage fall risk assessment, waiting room nurse rounded on patient. Found new confusion, lack of assessment, banded patient and called the Shift Coordinator to move to a visible area. Ultimately, the hall until a bed as available.”

“Rounded on patient and viewed their imaging and lab work. Saw the Ultrasound, which read ectopic pregnancy vs IUP [intrauterine pregnancy], spoke with Attending Physician to reassess and consult GYN [Gynecology] who saw patient, concerned for tubal pregnancy and took patient Level 1 to OR [Operating Room].”

Figure 3 Staff perceptions regarding WR experience (Qualitative)