Creating a Culture of Teamwork through use of the TeamSTEPPS Framework
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Background

Teamwork is essential for patient safety, as highly functioning teams make fewer errors. The intense and ever-changing atmosphere of the Emergency Department (ED) creates a high-risk environment for patient safety concerns. This complex setting demands a collaborative approach to care delivery, where structured methods of teamwork and communication are engrained in day-to-day practice.

Purpose and Objectives

• The purpose of this process improvement project was to implement and evaluate the effectiveness of Team Strategies and Tools to Enhance Performance and Patient Safety (TeamSTEPPS) framework and resources in the Adult Emergency Department at the University of Maryland Medical Center.

• Objectives
  ✓ Create a Culture of Teamwork
  ✓ Improve Patient Safety and Clinical Outcomes

Methods

• Study Design
  ✓ Pre-Test/Post-Test Design utilizing the TeamSTEPPS Teamwork Perceptions Questionnaire (T-TPQ)
    ▪ 35-item self-report tool
    ▪ 5-point Likert Scale
    ▪ Measures staff perceptions of: Team Structure, Leadership, Situation Monitoring, Mutual Support, and Communication

• Sample
  ✓ Multidisciplinary group of full-time emergency department clinicians and support staff: Nurses, Residents, Nurse Practitioners, Patient Care Techs (PCT), Unit Support Aids (USA), Transporters, and Clerical support staff.

• Kurt Lewin’s Change Theory and TeamSTEPPS Framework

Implementation

• TeamSTEPPS Fundamental Concepts:
  ✓ **Team Structure**: Determining team size, membership, leadership, composition.
  ✓ **Leadership**: Ability to coordinate activities of team members by ensuring team actions are understood, changes in information are shared, and that team members have the necessary resources.
  ✓ **Situation Monitoring**: Process of actively scanning and assessing situational elements to gain information, understanding, and awareness.
  ✓ **Mutual Support**: Ability to anticipate and support other team members’ needs through accurate knowledge about their responsibilities and workload.
  ✓ **Communication**: Process by which information is clearly and accurately exchanged among team members.

• TeamSTEPPS tools selected for implementation:
  ✓ I PASS the BATON: Standardized handoff tool
  ✓ CUS: A tool for advocacy, assertion, and mutual support. Signal words, such as “concern,” “uncomfortable,” and “safety issue” are used to catch the listener’s attention.
  ✓ Call Out: A tactic used to communicate critical information during an emergent event.
  ✓ Check-back: A closed-loop communication strategy used to verify and validate information exchange.
  ✓ Brief: Short session prior to start to discuss team formation; assign roles; establish expectations and climate; anticipate outcomes and likely contingencies.
  ✓ Debrief: Informal information exchange session designed to improve team performance and effectiveness; after action review.

Results

![Graph showing Total AED Staff and Participating AED Staff](image)

**T-TPQ Scores**

- Total AED Staff
- Participating AED Staff

Discussion

TeamSTEPPS provides an evidence-based framework to optimize patient outcomes by improving communication and teamwork skills among healthcare professionals. While not statistically significant, the mean scores for the total T-TPQ and four of the constructs (team structure, mutual support, situation monitoring, and communication) all improved from pre-survey to post-survey, with leadership remaining the same. The results of this project are encouraging and support continued devotion of resources to the integration of team training in the AED.