Keeping Nurses Up-to-Date With Cardiovascular Care

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PURPOSE

- To design and deliver an acute care educational program to enhance nurses’ knowledge about care of the cardiovascular patient at a safety-net facility.

BACKGROUND/SIGNIFICANCE

- Cardiovascular disease is the number one killer of both men and women in the United States.
- It is imperative that acute care nurses are well educated and up-to-date in caring for this population.

METHODS/PROCEDURES

- Several teaching strategies were used:
  - Classroom instruction
  - Printed material at point-of-care use
  - Clinical demonstration of competence
  - Journal Club

- Classes included:
  - Basic cardiovascular care
  - Advanced cardiovascular care
  - Electrophysiology studies
  - Management of post-cardiac catheterization patients

- Skill acquisition included:
  - EKG interpretation
  - Cardiac sheath care and removal

- Unit-based resources for reinforcement:
  - Rhythm of the Month
  - EKG Quick Reference Guide for Arrhythmias
  - Journal Club

MAJOR OUTCOMES

- Nurses reported a preference for classroom courses and informational postings to online learning methods to enhance their cardiovascular knowledge.
- The Care of the Cardiac Patient course is held bi-weekly and offers 1.25 hours of continuing education units (CEUs).
- In 2016, sixty-one nurses have attended Care of the Cardiac Patient with an overall satisfaction rate of 4.7/5 (5 equals most satisfied, 1 equals least satisfied).
- In 2016, ninety nurses attended the EKG Interpretation and Management of the Post-Cardiac Catheterization Patient courses with positive evaluations.
- Vascular access site complications for the first two quarters of 2016 for percutaneous coronary intervention patients was favorable at 1.78% compared with 5.4% to 20% in the literature.
- The cardiovascular Journal Club topics with number of attendees were Women and Heart Disease (n=14) and Heart Failure (n=9).
- Journal Club offers 1.0 hours of CEUs.
- In 2016, overall satisfaction with Journal Club is 3.8/4.
- Staff nurses and managers reported satisfaction with the Rhythm of the Month and EKG Quick Reference Guide.

CONCLUSIONS/IMPLICATIONS

- This multi-faceted strategy to cardiovascular education is well-received by staff nurses and managers.
- This approach could be used in other settings to improve specialty knowledge for staff nurses.