

Promoting Communication in an Outpatient Surgical Clinic
Utilizing a TeamSTEPPS Approach: A Quality Improvement Project.
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Abstract

Introduction. This quality improvement project, utilizing a nonprobability quantitative design, was performed, over a three-month period, with a single population-based comparison of pre and posttest data.

Objective. To evaluate the effect of the TeamSTEPPS, (Team Strategies and Tools to Enhance Performance and Patient Safety), office-based care program on a small, outpatient GI clinic to improve the perceptions of teamwork and communication.

Background. Management and staff of this GI clinic identified that there was a lack of effective communication and teamwork, were motivated to foster change and find a solution to the problem. The TeamSTEPPS program works to improve patient safety and satisfaction by solidifying collaboration among healthcare groups to achieve optimal outcomes for patients.

Setting. A small, urban, privately owned, outpatient GI surgical clinic in Washington State.

Aims. To teach an evidence-based teamwork program to improve this organization's sense of collaboration, effective communication and optimize team performance, while ultimately assisting in the long-term goal of enhanced patient safety. SMART goal: Employee participants will demonstrate improved perceptions of teamwork and collaboration from pre- survey compared to post-survey, as evidenced by improvement of greater than 3% in team perception scores in each of the five construct areas of teamwork: Team Structure, Communication, Leading Teams, Situation Monitoring, and Mutual Support.

Intervention. 1) Instructional meeting/in-service with qualified TeamSTEPPS facilitator, 2) Training modules every other week centered on the five constructs of the TeamSTEPPS program via in person or online modules, 3) Weekly team meetings to reinforce specific concepts.

Evaluation. The effectiveness of the intervention was evaluated by measuring teamwork pre- and post-intervention. This was done using the TeamSTEPPS TPQ (T-TPQ) survey. The TeamSTEPPS TPQ survey is a 35-question instrument that measures five constructs: leadership, mutual support, communication, team structure, and situation monitoring.

Results. The project showed an 89% response rate to both pre- and posttest T-TPQ, which demonstrated an investment to the project among employee participants. Each of the five constructs showed improvement in mean scores comparing pre and posttest responses indicating improved perceptions of teamwork amongst clinic staff.