

## TL13EOc – VISIBILITY, ACCESSIBILITY, AND COMMUNICATION

*Using the required empirical outcomes (EO) presentation format, provide one example of an improvement in patient care OR the nurse practice environment, associated with communication between Clinical nurse and the Nurse Manager.*

### **Problem**

Clinical nurses in the Surgical Stepdown (5GN-605427) [5GN] Unit at NewYork-Presbyterian/Columbia University Irving Medical Center (NYP/Columbia) actively review quality and patient experience data during daily huddles to identify areas of opportunity to improve the patient experience. At the 5GN Unit Council meetings, Sarah Garza-Ohl, MSN, MPH, RN, NE-BC, PCC, Patient Care Director (nurse manager), 5GN, reported that patient experience was trending downward for the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) survey question “During the hospital stay, how often were your room and bathroom kept clean?” (cleanliness of the hospital environment). The patient experience can be negatively impacted by the patient’s perception of cleanliness of the hospital environment. The clinical nurses agreed to target nursing practices and team member strategies to improve patient care.

### **Pre-Intervention**

April 2022:

- The 5GN “% always” response score for the HCAHPS question “cleanliness of the hospital environment” was 72.00 in April 2022.
- After reviewing recent patient experience data and trends posted on the unit visibility board related to cleanliness, Shirley Basa, BSN, RN, RN-BC, and Rebecca King, BSN, RN, PCCN, clinical nurses, 5GN, met with Ms. Garza-Ohl to discuss their interest in leading a performance improvement project to improve patient care and patient experience related to the HCAHPS room/environment cleanliness scores. Ms. King and Ms. Basa explained their professional development goal to engage in quality and safety initiatives as part of their applications for the upcoming clinical ladder program. Ms. Garza-Ohl provided

support and approval for their performance improvement project to improve the patient experience related to cleanliness on 5GN.

- Ms. Basa and Ms. King met with Jessi Green, MSN, RN, AGCNS-BC, CVRN, Program Manager, Cardiac Service Line, to perform a literature review focused on the relationship among hospital cleanliness, patient satisfaction, patient care, and patient outcomes. The studies suggested that a higher percentage of patients who reported that their room was “always” kept clean was associated with significantly lower rates of hospital-acquired *C. difficile* infection.
- Ms. Basa and Ms. King sought feedback from their peers and interprofessional team members regarding barriers to improving patient care and maintaining clean and clutter-free patient rooms/environments. Common issues identified included the following:
  - Limited number of trash cans in patient rooms
  - Lack of clarity on the role of environment services (EVS) team members on 5GN
  - Lack of clarity of the process to escalate concerns related to 5GN cleanliness to EVS leadership

Ms. King communicated the feedback to Ms. Garza-Ohl as they exchanged ideas for strategies to improve patient care related to room/environment cleanliness. Ms. Garza-Ohl provided ongoing feedback and encouragement for the nurses to act on their creative ideas.

- Ms. Garza-Ohl, Ms. King, and Ms. Basa spoke with Marie Telfort, Day Shift Supervisor, Environmental Services, to raise the concerns identified by the 5GN team. As planned, Ms. Garza-Ohl helped facilitate the discussion so that Ms. King and Ms. Basa could: clarify EVS team roles and the processes for escalating cleanliness-related concerns to EVS leadership; identify the names/contact information of EVS supervisors; identify how the 5GN and EVS teams can partner to keep patient rooms, bathrooms, and the unit clean.

May 2022:

- The 5GN “% always” response score for the HCAHPS question “cleanliness of the hospital environment” was 73.08 in May 2022.
- Ms. Basa and Ms. King emailed a survey to 5GN clinical nurses and the Intensive Care Unit technicians to determine their cleanliness-related knowledge, awareness, and behaviors, as well as their opinions on barriers to maintaining

5GN cleanliness. Survey results identified the following issues/barriers to maintain 5GN cleanliness:

- Lack of trash bags
  - Patient families using patient-only bathrooms
  - Lack of storage resulting in items cluttering patient rooms
- Ms. Basa and Ms. King analyzed the survey results and communicated the findings to Ms. Garza-Ohl. The three met to review the issues identified by the team to improve 5GN cleanliness and they formulated a plan for improvement with the following four-pronged approach:
    1. Bedside Strategies
    2. Escalating to EVS
    3. Respect for Patients
    4. Respect for Colleagues

### **Goal Statement**

To increase “% always” response score for the HCAHPS question “cleanliness of the hospital environment” on 5GN

### **Participants**

<b>Name/Credentials</b>	<b>Discipline</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Department/Unit</b>
Shirley Basa, BSN, RN, RN-BC	Nursing	Clinical Nurse	5GN
Rebecca King, BSN, RN, PCCN	Nursing	Clinical Nurse	5GN
Sarah Garza-Ohl, MSN, MPH, RN, NE-BC, PCCN	Nursing	Patient Care Director (Nurse Manager)	5GN
Jessi Green, MSN, RN, AGCNS-BC, CVRN	Nursing	Program Manager	Cardiac Service Line
Marie Telfort	Support Services	Supervisor, Support Services	Environmental Services

### **Intervention**

June 2022:

- Ms. Garza-Ohl ordered additional large trash cans, which doubled the number of trash receptacles on 5GN. This mitigated select barriers to cleanliness identified by the survey responses.

*Impact Statement: Upon listening to the nurses, the nurse manager acted. Securing an ample amount of large trash cans reduced the occurrence of unsightly overflowing trash and lessened the frequency with which the EVS department had to empty the cans. This contributed to the increased “% always” response score for the HCAHPS question “cleanliness of the hospital environment” on 5GN.*

- Ms. Basa and Ms. King created weekly 5GN cleanliness huddle messages and began including them in 5GN daily unit huddles. Outgoing 5GN charge nurses (clinical nurses), Ms. Basa, or Ms. King read aloud the huddle messages once a week. Additionally, Ms. Basa and Ms. King displayed the weekly huddle messages under the Patient Experience section of the 5GN unit visibility board.

*Impact Statement: Displaying key huddle messages around cleanliness improved everyone’s awareness of cleanliness and the impact on patient care. This led to the increased “% always” response scores for the HCAHPS question “cleanliness of the hospital environment” on 5GN.*

July 2022:

- Ms. Basa and Ms. King collaborated with Ms. Telfort and Ms. Garza-Ohl to have the facilities team install wall holders for stocking small and large trash bags in the 5GN equipment rooms. They collaborated about PAR (periodic automatic replenishment) levels to ensure adequate access to trash bags.

*Impact Statement: The EVS team stocking small and large trash bags (compatible with unit/bedside trash cans) in the new equipment room wall holders mitigated the lack of trash bags barrier noted by the respondents to the survey conducted by Ms. Basa and Ms. King, thereby decreasing the clutter and improving the cleanliness of the unit. This contributed to the increased “% always” response scores for the HCAHPS question “cleanliness of the hospital environment” on 5GN.*

- Ms. Basa and Ms. King created a “patient use only” sign in English and Spanish for patient bathroom doors. Ms. Basa and Ms. King communicated to Ms. Garza-Ohl the need to use the sign to limit bathroom use to only the patient. Ms. Garza-Ohl approved the sign for printing and installation on every bathroom door. Ms. Basa and Ms. King created a “take advantage of your lockable closet” sign for bedside closet doors. Ms. Basa and Ms. King communicated to Ms. Garza-Ohl the need to use the sign to encourage patients and families to use the closet in the rooms for personal items to reduce bedside clutter. Ms. Garza-Ohl approved the sign for printing and installation in each patient room.

*Impact Statement: Implementing the "patient use only" bathroom policy with a prominently displayed sign contributed to maintaining a cleaner environment in the patient's bathroom throughout their stay. Posting and encouraging patients and families to use the designated closet for personal belongings helps to improve the environment and patient care. This, in turn, positively influenced the patient's perception of the unit's cleanliness resulting in increased "% always" response scores for the HCAHPS question "cleanliness of the hospital environment" on 5GN.*

August 2022:

- Ms. Basa and Ms. King developed an educational pamphlet for their colleagues entitled, *Improving Cleanliness on 5GN*, which Ms. Garza-Ohl approved in the unit's budget for printing and educational purposes. The pamphlet primarily focused on bedside strategies, escalation to EVS, respect for patients, and respect for colleagues, as follows:
  - Bedside Strategies: Turn drawers toward bed for greater accessibility. Utilize bedside lockers for patient belongings. Scan the bedside for available supplies before gathering more. Refer visitors to "patient use only" bathroom signs and direct them to visitor bathrooms. Include environmental assessments in hourly rounding; clean and organize throughout the shift. Use small/large trash bags as needed, now located on the walls of both equipment rooms.
  - Escalation to EVS: (1) Directly notify 5GN EVS housekeepers (for inside patient rooms) or porters (for outside of patient rooms). (2) Use Sentact system to submit a service request with a confirmation number for an EVS service. (3) Telephone EVS main office or an EVS supervisor for urgent needs: Marie Telfort, Day Shift Supervisor; Audra Nero, Evening Shift Supervisor; or Tatjana DeSoto, Night Shift Supervisor.
  - Respect for Patients: Look at the environment through the eyes of the patients since their perspective may be different. If a patient makes you aware of an unclean item or area take the appropriate steps to ensure it is properly cleaned. Maintain a clean room/bathroom to reduce patients' anxiety about acquiring infections. Wash or sanitize your hands before and after providing care, even if gloves are worn. Hand hygiene saves lives. Offer hand sanitizer to patients after they use their commode or urinal at the bedside and before they eat.
  - Respect for Colleagues: Pick up trash on the floor and discard in trash can. Keep workspaces tidy and clean up after yourself. Discard medical

equipment after discharges before EVS arrives so that bedsides can be cleaned thoroughly. Clean/organize bedsides before shift handoff.

*Impact Statement: The nurse-led education using a pamphlet entitled, Improving Cleanliness on 5GN, was instrumental in educating the 5GN team on cleanliness, standardizing practices, fostering accountability, and contributing to a culture of cleanliness, ultimately enhancing the overall quality of care and work environment on 5GN. Leadership support for this project influenced the commitment of the team. This led to the increased “% always” response scores for the HCAHPS question “cleanliness of the hospital environment” on 5GN.*

- By the end of August 2022, Ms. Basa and Ms. King had fully implemented the pamphlets to achieve 100 percent completion of education by RNs and ICU technicians via the teach back and read and sign methods.

*Impact Statement: By educating all RNs and ICU technicians, the team gained the knowledge and resources needed to maintain cleanliness on the unit impacting the patient experience and perception of cleanliness on 5GN.*

#### Key References:

Dancer, S. J. (2009). The role of environmental cleaning in the control of hospital-acquired infection. *The Journal of Hospital Infection*, 73(4), 378–385.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhin.2009.03.030>

Durant D. J. (2021). Can patient-reported room cleanliness measures predict hospital-acquired *C. difficile* infection? A study of acute care facilities in New York state. *American Journal of Infection Control*, 49(4), 452–457.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ajic.2020.08.024>

#### **Outcome**

TL13EOc 5GN “% Always” Response Score for Cleanliness of the Hospital Environment

