

Improving Outcomes when Elder Patients are Asked “What Matters Most.”

NICHE + Nebraska Methodist Hospital
Regional Geriatric Nursing Conference

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Background

- By 2040, there will be 26.57% increase of the population aged 65 years and older (Maryland Department of Aging, 2021).
- As people age, care often becomes more complex. Health systems are frequently unprepared for this complexity, and older adults suffer disproportionate harm while in the health system's care (IHI, 2020).
- The identified gap is that these patients and caregivers are not asked: “what matters most”.

Purpose

This DNP project aimed to improve patient care, as evidenced by patient satisfaction in the elder care unit. The objectives were: 1) empower nurses to ask patients and caregivers "what matters" and then adjust the care plan with that goal in mind, and 2) improve patient satisfaction by providing them with resources and support when developing a plan of care that is driven by "What matters" (Rompala, 2020).

Methods

- Translational Science Model:** the Knowledge-to-Action (KTA) translation model
- Setting:** Community Hospital Medical/Surgical/Elder Care Unit
- Population:** Admitted patients 65 years and older, 134 patient participants
- Inclusion Criteria:** Patients 65 years and older able to communicate and/or with a caregiver.
- Exclusion Criteria:** On Isolation or Aphasic, and without a caregiver
- Intervention:** Assessing “What matters most” and aligning that care accordingly (Ritchey et al., 2023)

Outcomes/Results

- During the eight week implementation period, there were 657 direct observations made.
 - White boards listed “What Matters Most” to the patient with 89.88% completion.
 - Retrospective review of HAHPS completed looking at top box scores for the questions “Rate this hospital” and Recommend this hospital.”

Service Date	Rate this hospital 1-10	# surveys returned	Recommend this Hospital 1-10	# surveys returned
3 months Prior	60%	25	53.85%	26
60 days Post implementation	66.67	3	66.87	3

Because the HCAHPS survey return for patients serviced during this intervention

Conclusion

- The implementation of asking patients 65 years and older “What matters most?” is the first step in developing an age-friendly elder care unit.
- Asking “What Matters” is now being done on EVERY unit for all patients 65 years and older.
- Asking “what matters most” was added to the admission and daily shift assessment in the EHR, and the results are being documented on the whiteboard in the patient's room.
- Rounding is completed by the unit leadership, DNP student, and the Patient Experience team, and it was found that the whiteboards were complete 89.88%. details here

Next Steps/Future Research

This facility is working to develop an Elder Care/ACE unit in connection with IHI and NICHE.

Over the next year, the unit will be focusing on having the nurses and PCTs become a certified geriatric nurses or PCTs.

Action plan will be developed to implement the 4M's: “Medication, Mobility, Mentation, and What Matters.”