How Are We Doing? Patient Care Satisfaction in the Medical Intensive Care Unit

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Introduction: Across the United States, hospitals strive to maximize the patient experience, including clinical outcomes and interpersonal relationships. Patient satisfaction is now a vital part of the health care delivery system. The Medical Intensive Care Unit (MICU) cares for critically ill patients with a multitude of disease processes. Families are heavily impacted but are frequently forgotten as the focus lies on the patient. A family satisfaction survey was developed to assess various aspects of care rendered. Methods: The 24-question FS-ICU questionnaire was utilized. Each question was graded as excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor. The surveys were made available at the secretaries' desks in the MICU with collection boxes located in the waiting room and by the secretary. Over 3 months the MICU staff approached families of patients (with positive or negative outcomes) to complete the surveys. The surveys were then collected daily and filed in the nursing office for daily review. If needed, all major negative comments were addressed immediately. A grading system was created for each question to calculate an average for each. Results: A total of 27 surveys were completed over the 3-month period by the patient (1), spouse (12), children (6), parent (3), or other family members of the patient. The answers to each question were then tallied and adjusted to a star scale, 5 for excellent and down to 1 for poor. Questions that were rated with excellent (5 stars) or very good (4 stars) were combined and rated in a percent. When pooled together, of the 24 questions, 23 questions scored 84.6% or better. 15 of the 24 questions rated 90% or better. One single question was 65.4%. Discussion: Despite the distress and uncertainty felt when a family member is critically ill, the results of this survey illustrate the MICU has been performing at a 4-5 star level in nearly all categories of the FS-ICU questionnaire. The single element the MICU scored poorly on (65.4%) was in regards to the environment in the ICU waiting room, a shared space between the medical ICU and a separate procedural department. Overall the care provided and staff interactions were deemed very positive.

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