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Postpartum Patients Reports of Satisfaction with a Welcome Meal after a Vaginal Delivery

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SAN JOSE STATE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF NURSING

MASTER'S PROGRAM PROJECT OPTION (PLAN B)
PROJECT SIGNATURE FORM

STUDENT NAME Jessica Pinilla

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TITLE OF PROJECT postpartum patients reports
of satisfaction with a welcome
meal after a vaginal delivery

NAME OF JOURNAL JOGNN / Journal of Obstetric
Gynecologic and Neonatal
Nursing

The project and manuscript have been successfully completed and meet the standards of the School of Nursing at San Jose State University. The project demonstrates the application of professional knowledge, clinical expertise, and scholarly thinking. An abstract of the project and two copies of the manuscript are attached.

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Please submit this form to the Graduate Coordinator. Attach abstract, two copies of the manuscript, and documentation of submission to the journal (i.e., postal receipt).

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The purpose of this research study was to assess patient perspectives regarding a special Welcome Meal. The focus was on patients' feeling welcomed and important because prior research has shown that when a patient's expectations are exceeded, patient satisfaction increases. This study suggests that receiving a Welcome Meal may improve their experience on a postpartum unit.

Design: Prior to discharge, each patient on the maternity unit was served a special Welcome Meal. A questionnaire was given to patients that consisted of six questions. The six questions incorporated six themes found in research literature on improving patient satisfaction. These themes included exceeding one's expectations, feeling important, feeling welcome, having a positive experience, increasing one's morale and providing good quality food.

Patients/Participants: The sample consisted of 30 postpartum patients between the ages of 20-47 whom had undergone a vaginal delivery of a live infant.

Results: The highest rated question indicated that the Welcome Meal made the patients feel welcome (96.6%). The second highest rated question shows the Welcome Meal to be of good quality (96.6%). The Welcome Meal not only made the patient feel important, but also created a more

1 pleasant hospital experience. Overall 86.6% agreed that it
2 gave a positive experience and exceeded their expectations
3 (90%).
4
5

6
7 **Conclusion:** The research indicated that the six themes
8 found in improving patient satisfaction were also present
9 when asked about the Welcome Meal. The limitations to the
10 study include having a small non-random sample of 30
11 patients. This study suggests that having such a meal
12 implemented on the maternity unit may have a positive
13 impact on patient satisfaction. Future studies should
14 provide a larger sample size. Further research is needed
15 to correlate improved patient satisfaction and the Welcome
16 Meal in a pre and post test design.
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28 **Key Words:** patient meals, patient satisfaction, postpartum
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Introduction

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4 A few people and some research studies have attempted to
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6 define satisfaction. Donabedian described patient
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8 satisfaction as an outcome not clearly defined, making it
9
10 difficult to measure, and validates the quality of care
11
12 (1966). He also states that patient satisfaction is an
13
14 expression of a patients' judgment. The definition of
15
16 patient satisfaction is constantly evolving. With the
17
18 difficulty defining and measuring satisfaction, many
19
20 studies have explored the relationship between satisfaction
21
22 and variables that might affect it (Carr-Hill, 1992). The
23
24 studies also expressed that the sources of dissatisfaction
25
26 can vary, and can be defined differently by different
27
28 people and by the same person at different times. The aim
29
30 of this research is to determine if the themes or variables
31
32 that affect satisfaction are present when receiving a
33
34 special Welcome Meal.
35
36

Literature Review

37
38
39
40 Patient opinion of services has gained popularity and has
41
42 increased research in possible ways to improving services
43
44 provided to patients. In the review of research articles,
45
46 there were six themes in patient satisfaction in relation
47
48 to the Welcome Meal.
49
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Theme 1: Exceeding one's expectation

1
2
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4 Early research by Abramowitz (1987) shows that patients'
5
6 who find the quality of care and the services better than
7
8 expected are more satisfied. Carr-Hill (1992) expresses
9
10 that satisfaction is complex and is related to factors
11
12 including life style, past experiences and future
13
14 expectations. Although patient satisfaction may be
15
16 complex, there may be small special details that may help
17
18 improve it. Exceeding a patients' expectation by providing
19
20 a special Welcome Meal may be one.
21

Theme 2: Feeling important

22
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25
26 According to Dube, Lauette, Trudeau, and Belanger, (2008),
27
28 the satisfaction of basic human needs such as recognition,
29
30 reassurance, and status is crucial. Acknowledging the
31
32 patient provides satisfaction and contentment. It is
33
34 necessary to emphasize patients' views in improving the
35
36 quality of health services (Shaikh, Mobeen, Azam, &
37
38 Rabbani, 2008). Patients' opinions and feelings should be
39
40 recognized. A patient who is recognized with a Welcome
41
42 meal is more likely to be satisfied with their hospital
43
44 stay.
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Theme 3: Feeling welcome

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4 Not only is it essential for the patient to feel important,
5
6 but they also need to feel welcomed. Hospital staff has a
7
8 significant role in providing this to patients. In
9
10 research done by Davis and Adams-Greenly (1994), it is
11
12 important on how welcome staff members make patients feel
13
14 when they arrive. Showing genuine concern with responses,
15
16 preparations and education make a significant difference.
17
18

Theme 4: Having a positive experience

19
20
21 Through surveying patients about their reaction to the
22
23 Welcome Meal we can gain insight into how patients
24
25 interpret the experience. Patient satisfaction is a
26
27 reflection of their lived hospital experience (Henderson,
28
29 Caplan, & Daniel, 2004). Providing a positive experience
30
31 with a Welcome meal may improve the experience a patient
32
33 receives on the postpartum unit. Personalizing care can
34
35 give way to a positive experience (Schechter, 1993).
36
37
38

Theme 5: Increase one's morale

39
40
41 A low morale can contribute to negative outcomes (Beyea,
42
43 2004). A Welcome meal can provide a positive change in
44
45 procedures, which may improve a patients' morale and
46
47 quicken a recovery. Receiving a special Welcome Meal will
48
49 change the daily routine and establish a good situation.
50

Theme 6: Provide good quality food

Dissatisfaction with meals results in reduced food intake, leading to poor nutritional status, weight loss, functional decline, and depression in patients (Galanos, Pieper, Cornoni-Huntly, Bales, & Fillenbaum, 1994). A patient who is better nourished and more satisfied has a speedier recovery.

Conceptual Framework

The Plan Do Study Act (PDSA) Cycle is a model framework for the improvement of a process used for testing a change in the work setting. According to the Institute for Healthcare Improvement

(<http://www.ihi.org/IHI/Topics/Improvement/ImprovementMethods/HowToImprove/testingchanges.htm>), Dr. W. Edwards Deming adopted Walter Shewarts' Plan Do Check Act (PDCA) Cycle from the 1930's. Later, it was known as the Plan Do Study Act (PDSA) Cycle. The model provides a framework for the improvement of a process. It can be used to guide the improvement project. The Shewhart cycle has four stages:

Plan: Determine what can be improved and what can be changed

Do: Implement the new processes

Study: Measure the new processes and compare the results

1 Act: Analyze the differences to determine the cause and
2
3 identify where to apply changes that will include
4
5
6 improvement.
7

8
9 The cycle is used to make changes that lead to improvement
10
11 and provide continuous quality improvement (Best &
12
13 Neuhauser, 2006). By implementing the Welcome meal, one
14
15 can use the PDSA cycle by planning the meal, trying the
16
17 meal, observing the results, and acting on what is learned.
18
19 By refining change through several PDSA cycles, one can
20
21 continually improve the patient experience and ultimately
22
23 implement the change to other hospital units.
24

25 26 Methodology

27 28 29 **Study Design**

30
31 The quality improvement program was implemented by the
32
33 Dietary Department in October 2008, in hopes to improve
34
35 patient satisfaction scores on the maternity unit. A
36
37 Welcome Meal was served to postpartum patients during their
38
39 first 48 hours before discharge. The Welcome Meal consists
40
41 of choosing one special gourmet meal for lunch or dinner.
42
43 The meal included a garden salad or soup Du Jour, rice
44
45 risotto, and a choice between Beef Wellington, Balsamic
46
47 chicken breast, or Ratatouille. A double layer chocolate
48
49 piece of cake or fruit was served for dessert. Patients
50

1 also received a gift of an orchid with the meal. The
2
3 Special Meal menu was translated into Spanish. A
4
5 vegetarian plate was offered to those who desired one.
6
7 This study was to demonstrate how the Welcome Meal may
8
9 improve patient satisfaction.
10

11
12 A convenience sampling technique was used to recruit
13
14 patients to complete the questionnaire. When a patient
15
16 appeared awake, the patient was approached by the
17
18 researcher to participate in the study. After receiving a
19
20 written consent, the patient was given a questionnaire. A
21
22 total of 30 postpartum patients' between 20-47 years of age
23
24 participated. Data were collected in the month of April in
25
26 2009.
27

28
29 The questionnaire consisted of six questions pertaining to
30
31 the Welcome Meal. The six questions incorporated six
32
33 themes found in research literature on improving patient
34
35 satisfaction. An un-numbered five-point Likert scale was
36
37 used to measure the responses to the questionnaire. The
38
39 Likert scale determines the level of agreement or
40
41 disagreement the patient has chosen for each statement.
42
43 Responses to the Likert scale were subsequently converted
44
45 to numerical scores for the purpose of statistical
46
47 analysis.
48
49
50

1 The statements on the questionnaire were as followed:
2

3 1)The Welcome Meal meets and exceeds your expectations
4

5 2)The Welcome Meal makes you feel important
6

7 3)The Welcome Meal makes you feel welcome
8

9 4)The Welcome Meal gives you a positive experience
10

11 5)The Welcome Meal increases your morale
12

13 6)The Welcome Meal provides good quality food
14

15 The optional responses according to the Likert Scale were:
16

17 Totally Disagree
18

19 Disagree
20

21 Neither
22

23 Agree
24

25 Totally Agree
26

27 Results 28

29 The mean age was 31.5 years old, and the standard deviation
30 was 6.91 years. Among the 30 postpartum patients, the race
31 composition was Caucasian: 11 or 36.7 percent, Asian: 4 or
32 13.3 percent, Filipino-Pacific Islander: 4 or 13.3 percent,
33 Hispanic: 11 or 36.7 percent.
34

35 The highest rated question indicated the Welcome Meal made
36 the patients feel welcome (96.6%). The second highest
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1 rated question shows the welcome Meal to be of good quality
2
3 (96.6%).
4

5
6 The welcome meal not only made patients feel important, but
7
8 it also created a more pleasant hospital stay. Overall
9
10 86.6% agreed that it gave a positive experience and
11
12 exceeded their expectations (figure 1).
13

14 Discussion

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16
17 The purpose of this study was to determine what influences
18
19 a special Welcome Meal has on patients on a postpartum
20
21 unit. The results show that the Welcome Meal did exceed
22
23 their expectations and provided a positive experience.
24
25 Patient satisfaction is crucial to remaining competitive in
26
27 today's healthcare market. This study implies that it is
28
29 beneficial to implement such quality improvement programs
30
31 to improve patient satisfaction. A Welcome Meal is not
32
33 only a meal, but also a small gift to patients. The
34
35 Welcome Meal is meant to celebrate the joyous occasion of
36
37 giving life. Being able to celebrate this event with a
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39 Welcome Meal allows patients enjoy their birthing
40
41 experience. The Welcome Meal is a simple act that can
42
43 offer an advantage towards improving a patient's stay on
44
45 the postpartum unit.
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Conclusion

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4 This study suggests that providing a special Welcome Meal
5
6 may have an impact on patient satisfaction. Patient
7
8 satisfaction data is important as an indicator of a
9
10 patients' perception of quality. Identifying what
11
12 influences healthcare consumers to perceive quality care
13
14 and be satisfied is difficult. Healthcare facilities are
15
16 interested in maintaining high levels of satisfaction in
17
18 order to stay competitive in the healthcare market. In
19
20 conclusion, the findings help both nursing administrators
21
22 and staff in their efforts to improve quality of care and
23
24 patient satisfaction.
25

Limitations

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30 This study design has some limitations and should be
31
32 considered in light of the findings. First, the study was
33
34 conducted in the postpartum unit of only one hospital.
35
36 Allowing other postpartum units and other types of units to
37
38 be incorporated would benefit the study. Second, the
39
40 sample size was small and the study mean may not represent
41
42 the true mean. Also, having a larger sample size will
43
44 allow other races to be included in the study. Third, the
45
46 sample was non-random. The participants were volunteers
47
48 and were only patients that were awake. The results may
49
50

1 represent a positive bias towards persons willing to
2 provide input about their hospital stay. Having a random
3 sample of patients would increase the generalizability of
4 the results of the study.
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9
10 Fourth, there is no reliability or validity regarding the
11 survey questions used in this research study. Future
12 research may include using other units besides maternity
13 and using a questionnaire that has been already used and
14 tested in research. Fifth, this study was not correlated
15 with overall patient satisfaction. A hospital experience
16 is made up of many interactions and exchanges. The Welcome
17 Meal is just one of many interactions patients experience.
18 More research into the effect that one meal has on the
19 overall patient satisfaction scores is needed.
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31 Implications for Practice

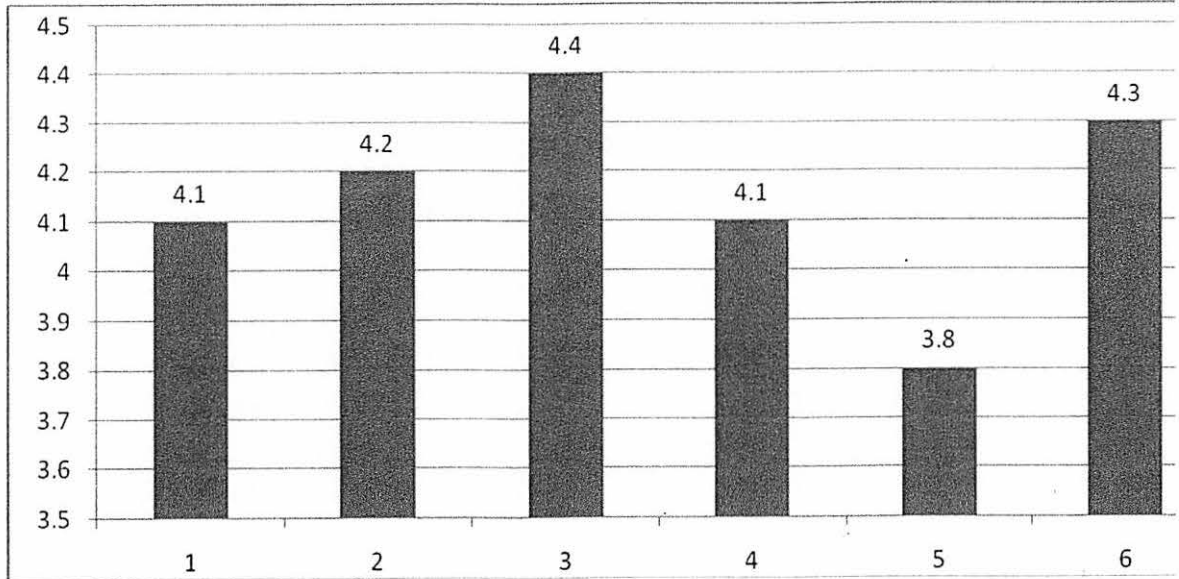
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34 The data for this study emphasize that a special Welcome
35 Meal on Maternity unit may improve a patients' hospital
36 stay by exceeding their expectations, making them feel
37 important and welcomed, providing a positive experience,
38 increasing their morale, and providing good quality food.
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45 Using the PDSA cycle is valuable when implementing a
46 quality improvement program such as the welcome meal. One
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can improve the health care process by planning it, trying
it, observing the results, and acting on what is learned.

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1 **Figure 1**

2
3 **Welcome Meal Item Means N = 30**



24
25
26 **Y Axis:**

27
28 1 -Totally Disagree 2 -Disagree 3 -Neither 4 -Agree 5 -Totally Agree

29
30 **X Axis:**

- 31 1)The Welcome Meal meets and exceeds your expectations
32 2)The Welcome Meal makes you feel important
33 3)The Welcome Meal makes you feel welcome
34 4)The Welcome Meal gives you a positive experience
35 5)The Welcome Meal increases your morale
36 6)The Welcome Meal provides good quality food
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