Evaluating and Educating Adult Post-Operative Day 1 Patients on Pain Management

Kristen Larue BSN, RN
Lehigh Valley Health Network, kristen_r.larue@lvhn.org

Kristina Wharton BSN, RN
Lehigh Valley Health Network, kristina_m.wharton@lvhn.org

Evaluating and Educating Adult Post-Operative Day 1 Patients on Pain Management

Kristina Wharton, BSN, RN & Kristen LaRue, BSN, RN

Lehigh Valley Health Network, Allentown, Pennsylvania
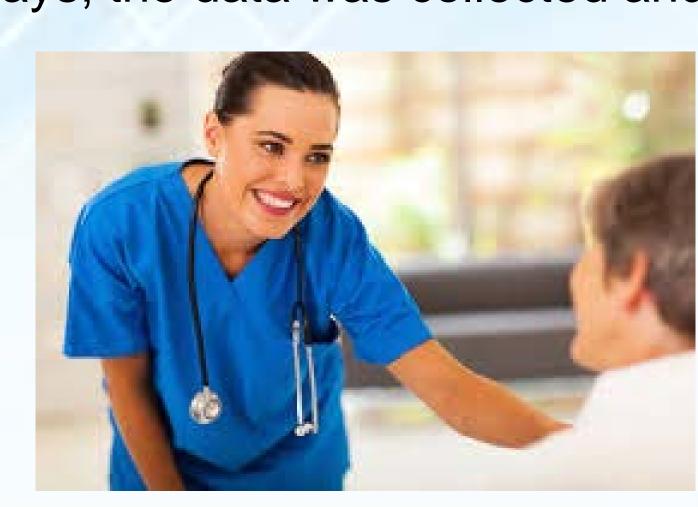
Significance

- Pain is a complex process that has proven to be difficult to resolve as pain is subjective.
- The Joint Commission stressed the importance of pain being the "fifth vital sign".
- The goal of proper post-operative pain management is to lessen pain to expedite the recovery and avoid complications.
  - Uncontrolled pain can affect a patient's overall well-being – their sleep, ability to heal, appetite, and mental health.
- Currently at LVHN, there is no defined tool used by all health care professionals to educate patients on their pain management and relief.
  - "Your New Medicines & The Most Common Side Effects" Sheet

Purpose

- The purpose of this EBP research project was to determine whether educating adult post-operative day 1 patients* on pain management, through teach back, would be beneficial.
  *Excluding post-operative kidney transplant patients

Implementation

- An assessment packet was developed that included simple and concise instructions for the RNs to collect patient data in addition to a pre-assessment, teach back, and post-assessment.
- The assessment packets were placed in a centralized location on 4KS and 7K, making it easy for the RNs to pick up a packet(s) in the beginning of their shift and drop the completed packet(s) off at the end of their shift.
- After 18 days, the data was collected and analyzed.

Evidence

- In spite of increased knowledge, effective post-operative pain management continues to be a major challenge.
- Nurses and physicians often underestimate patients' post-operative pain.
- A major problem in pain relief has been the inadequate communication between nurses and their patients.
- Understanding a patient's prior-to-admission medications could positively impact their post-operative pain management.
  - Orthopedic surgical patients can present with tolerance and dependence as opioids are used to treat their chronic pain.
- Emphasizing the importance of utilizing pain medications before pain is severe.
  - Severe pain is difficult to treat as it takes time for medications to take effect.
- Why is teach back beneficial to patients?
  - Educating patients goes beyond simply providing patients with information; it empowers patients to be an active participant in their health care.
  - Health care professionals tend to direct their focus on education materials, rather than assessing the patient's prior knowledge.
  - Studies show that with better education, patients have a more thorough understanding of their pain medications leading them to utilize the medications appropriately.

Adult Post-Operative Day 1 Pain Medication Knowledge Assessment Overall

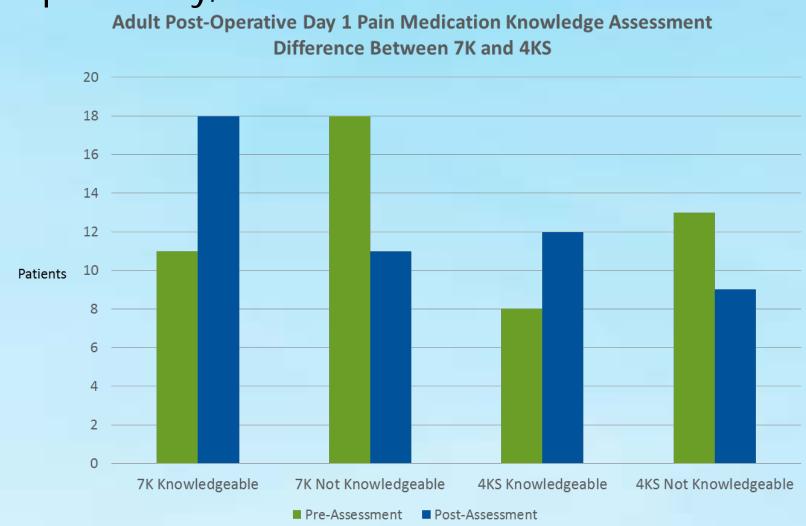(Bar chart: Patients vs. Knowledgeable / Not Knowledgeable; Pre-Assessment ~19 Knowledgeable, Post-Assessment ~30 Knowledgeable; Pre-Assessment ~31 Not Knowledgeable, Post-Assessment ~20 Not Knowledgeable)
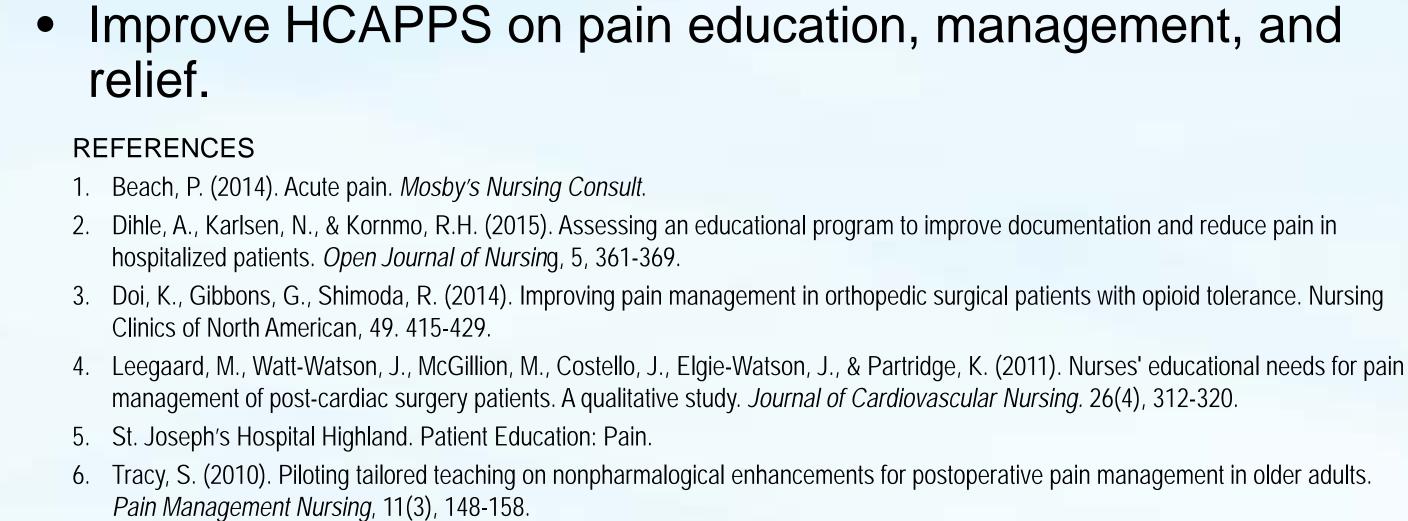■ Pre-Assessment ■ Post-Assement

Discoveries

- This project was designed to assess patients' baseline knowledge prior to teach back and whether their knowledge improved following teach back.
- Pre-assessment: 38% of patients were knowledgeable
- Post-assessment: 60% of patients were knowledgeable
- Barriers
  - Measuring pain (subjective), patient's ability to retain information/education while in pain, desire to have 0 out of 10 pain post-operatively, and nurses workload.

Adult Post-Operative Day 1 Pain Medication Knowledge Assessment Difference Between 7K and 4KS

(Bar chart: Patients; categories 7K Knowledgeable, 7K Not Knowledgeable, 4KS Knowledgeable, 4KS Not Knowledgeable; ■ Pre-Assessment ■ Post-Assessment)

Future Goals

- Train the clinical staff on how to properly evaluate and educate their post-operative patients using the assessment and teach back tool.
- Implement the pain assessment and teach back tool to Medical-Surgical units throughout LVHN Cedar Crest.
- Improve HCAPPS on pain education, management, and relief.

REFERENCES
1. Beach, P. (2014). Acute pain. Mosby's Nursing Consult.
2. Dihle, A., Karlsen, N., & Kornmo, R.H. (2015). Assessing an educational program to improve documentation and reduce pain in hospitalized patients. Open Journal of Nursing, 5, 361-369.
3. Doi, K., Gibbons, G., Shimoda, R. (2014). Improving pain management in orthopedic surgical patients with opioid tolerance. Nursing Clinics of North American, 49. 415-429.
4. Leegaard, M., Watt-Watson, J., McGillion, M., Costello, J., Elgie-Watson, J., & Partridge, K. (2011). Nurses' educational needs for pain management of post-cardiac surgery patients. A qualitative study. Journal of Cardiovascular Nursing. 26(4), 312-320.
5. St. Joseph's Hospital Highland. Patient Education: Pain.
6. Tracy, S. (2010). Piloting tailored teaching on nonpharmalogical enhancements for postoperative pain management in older adults. Pain Management Nursing, 11(3), 148-158.
7. Whitman, M. (2015, January). Patient education: What worries the patient most? Nursing. 45(1), 52-54.

A PASSION FOR BETTER MEDICINE.™

Lehigh Valley Health Network