Improving the Surgical Experience for Children with Autism

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Child Life Services

March 6, 2018
About Children’s National
Objectives

Demonstrate how process improvement creates a better experience for children, teens, young adults and their parents, caregivers and the care team.

Identify collaborative team techniques that help ensure children, teens and young adults with special needs and/or autism receive improved care in the surgical setting.
https://youtu.be/Lr4_dOorquQ
Autism is one of the fastest growing developmental disorders in the US

Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) affects 1 in 68 children and 1 in 42 boys
Autism in our Healthcare Setting

Hospital Admissions 14,895

Outpatient Visits 450,080

Emergency Department Visits 120,484

All Surgical Cases Performed 16,718
Joseph E. Roberts Surgical Center

Surgical Cases Performed
14,508

213
The Pre-Program Experience
Joseph E. Roberts Surgical Center

- Family
- Nursing
- Support Staff
- Physicians

Child Life
Advancing Developmentally Sensitive Care

- The Help Me Keep Calm program was developed by ED Child Life specialists.

- This initial program provided a blueprint for the development of similar programs in other areas of the hospital.
Developing the Help Me Keep Calm Program in the Surgical Center

- Finding Resources
- Identifying Patients
- Creating the Safe Passage Plan
Sandy’s Story

- Sandy was a 12 year old female twin scheduled for an IUD placement
- She has a diagnosis of autism and developmental delay
- She is non-verbal and blind
- Sandy is also wheel-chair bound, but does walk some with assistance
Current State

Patients Served by Year

Prevalence: 1 in 68 children has an Autism Spectrum Diagnosis

2016: 242 patients
2017: 236 patients
2018: 19 patients
2016 Referral Source

- POCC: 58%
- DDS: 7%
- NSU: 3%
- Child Life: 15%
- Anesthesiologist/Surgeon: 3%
- Other: 14%

Colors:
- Red: POCC
- Gray: DDS
- Yellow: NSU
- Green: Child Life
- Blue: Anesthesiologist/Surgeon
- Purple: Other

Source: Children's National
2017 Referral Source

- POCC: 56%
- DDS: 5%
- NSU: 6%
- OR Child Life: 11%
- Anesthesiologist/Surgeon: 1%
- Other: 21%
2018 Referral Source

- POCC: 32%
- DDS: 5%
- OR Child Life: 42%
- Anesthesiologist/Surgeon: 0%
- Other: 21%
Age Range of Patients

- Pre-School: 12%
- School Age: 57%
- Adolescents/Young Adults: 31%

Children's National
Team Feedback

Impact of Information Received on Patient Experience

- 10: Extremely Positive Impact
- 1: No Impact

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Next Steps

- PACU
- Neurosciences and Neurology Unit
- Autism Behavioral Communication Support Program (ABC)
  - Advancing Developmentally Sensitive Care Across the Organization
- EMR
  - Registry and System to identify patients with autism and/or special needs
  - Assessments available to all care teams
Improving the Patient Experience
It Takes A Team

- Everyone working toward the same goal
- Good communication between team members
- Creative and adaptive atmosphere fostered by leveraging team members’ strengths
- Training and education provided
- Opportunities for input and feedback
Questions?
Thank you for attending

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