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Making Strides to Improve Quality Nursing Care

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Abstract

Background: Over the last few decades America's non-English (predominantly Spanish) speaking population has significantly increased and is predicted to continue rising in the coming years. With an increase in Spanish speaking patients and low numbers of nurses who are fluent, miscommunications between nurses and non-English speaking patients are inevitable. These language barriers lead to increased sentinel events, mistrust, and dissatisfaction with nursing care for patients and their families. The purpose of this research study is to call for reevaluation of current practices and implementation of more reliable techniques for communication between nurses and their non-English speaking patients. Methods: Two acute care, medical surgical units each with 24-40 beds will be stocked with posters and pamphlets containing translations of common words and phrases used to communicate basic patient care needs and interactions performed by nurses. Implementation of training modules and classes will also be integrated into nursing profiles which will be easily accessible at the nurse's convenience. The use of telecommunication devices and interpreters will be monitored and there will be at least two devices readily available on both units. Results: Improvement in quality care will be evidenced by collected patient satisfaction surveys, a decrease in recorded medication errors, positive patient care input/surveys completed by nurses, expected decreased incidence of miscommunication between patients, their families, and nurses.