Deaconess 4: Resident Sign-Out

The Problem
Residents rotating through the BIDMC Inpatient Psychiatry Unit, Deaconess 4, noted deficiencies in verbal and written sign-out leading to incomplete transmission of patient information, high levels of resident dissatisfaction with the sign-out process, and concern that patient care could be delayed and adversely impacted. Residents undertook to create new sign-out procedures that would improve Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Timeliness of sign-out procedure and impact Safety of patient care.

Aim/Goal
Goal of the project was to create effective/efficient verbal and written sign-out procedures that would improve transmission of patient information (measured by chart audit of 15 key pieces of information) and improved resident satisfaction with the sign-out process (measured by improved survey metric of residents).

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The Interventions
- Resident survey of satisfaction
- Development of standardized template for written sign-out
- Development of an example guide demonstrating how to complete the template for written sign-out
- Creation of orientation session on sign-out
- Development of chart audit tool (15 key elements of written sign-out) to gauge effectiveness of handoff

The Results/Progress to Date
- Initial Resident Satisfaction Survey (Conducted Based on resident satisfaction with sign-out process May 2014- May 2015)
- Development and Implementation of Template Tool in personalized team census (6/2015)

Lessons Learned
- The biggest challenge to continuity of sign-out process has been the lack of an on-site chief or upper resident to continuously reorient residents rotating on Deaconess 4 to the use of the template tool to ensure use/compliance
- The template tool is a living document editable by users. Overtime it has been edited by individuals without establishing a larger team consensus. These minor edits likely represent real-time consensus and will allow the template tool to evolve.
- Elements have been accidentally deleted so the template and guide need periodically to be monitored and periodically reposted

Next Steps/What Should Happen Next
- Audit 8 dates for completeness of sign-out (chart audit tools) before and after implementation template/dedicated orientation activity
- Follow-up resident satisfaction survey
- Revision of Template as guided by chart audit/resident consensus
- Consider creation of an online standardized guide on residency website
- Continue training module integrated into orientation activities with annual resident survey of sign-out practices

For more information, contact:
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