

An Educational Tool to Improve Caregiver Knowledge about Post-Operative CVICU Care Timelines

INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

Education for caregivers of cardiac surgery patients provides mental health benefits, including reduced uncertainty and emotional stress [1,2].

Cardiovascular ICU (CVICU) nurses at Unity Health Toronto (UHT) noted caregivers regularly express gaps in knowledge regarding the immediate post-operative period.

Despite existing resources given to patients and families before surgery. These specific educational needs often fall to nurses, further exacerbating their cognitive strain and workload.

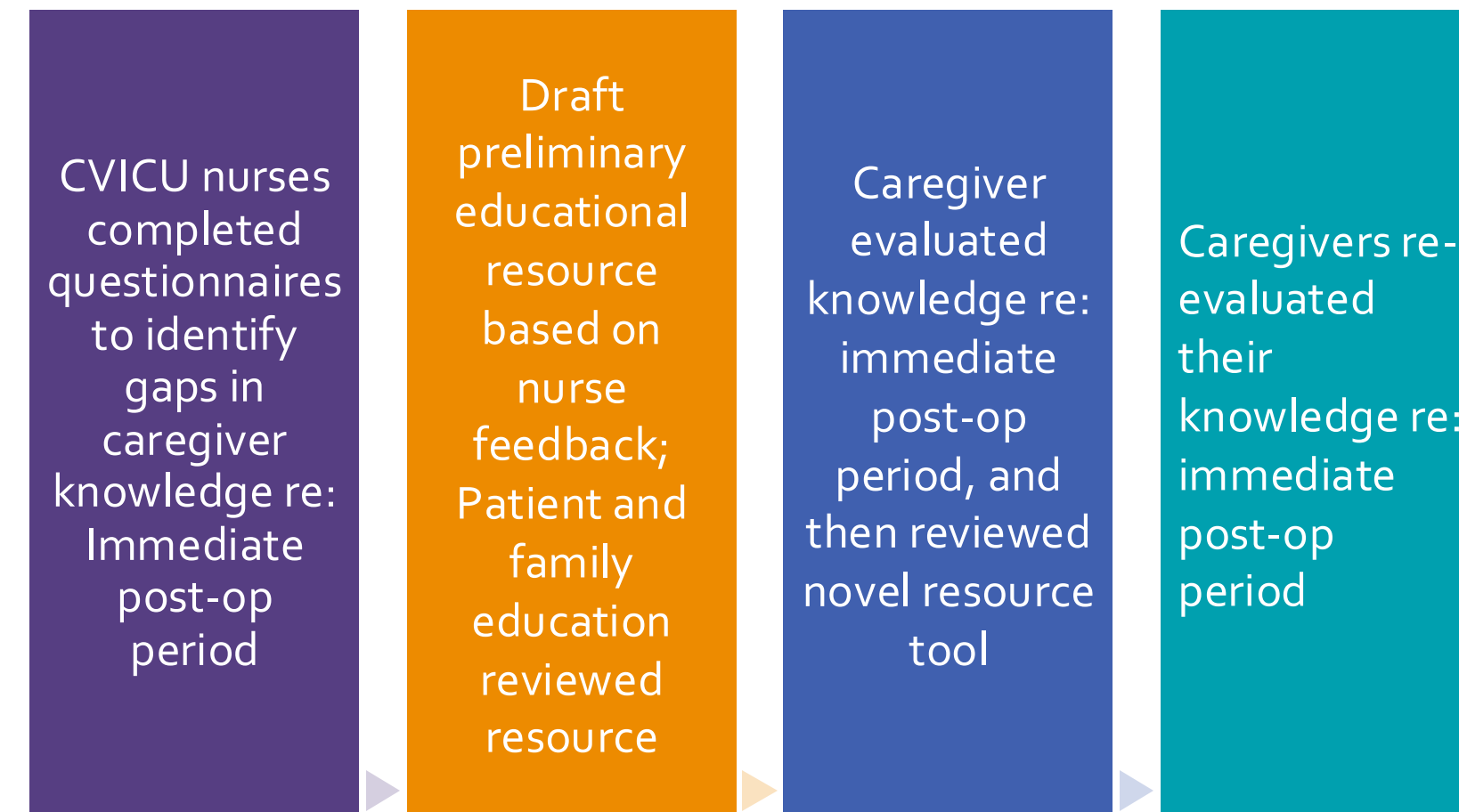
OBJECTIVES

1. Understand the current educational gaps in knowledge for patients and families identified by CVICU nurses, specifically surrounding what to expect in the post-surgical period
2. Develop a one-page educational infographic resource that outlines the post-operative care timeline for caregivers of cardiac surgery patients
3. Conduct pre- and post- knowledge scores for caregivers of cardiac surgery patients, before and after they review the educational resource tool to understand how such a tool can impact their knowledge of what to expect in the post-surgical period

AIM

The aim of this project was to develop and assess the impact of providing a short, easily digestible educational resource to caregivers at UHT on the CVICU post-operative care period in alignment with the RNAO Facilitating Client-Centered Learning guideline³

PROCESS & INTERVENTIONS



RESULTS

Among CVICU nurses ...

79% felt current educational materials inadequately prepared caregivers

67% felt caregivers appeared to lack a clear understanding of the immediate post-operative process and required information aligned with the care timeline

Among caregivers ...

Pre-implementation of the educational tool,

21%

rated themselves as "very knowledgeable"

vs

Post-implementation of the educational tool,

92%

rated themselves as "very knowledgeable"

EDUCATIONAL TOOL

0- 1 Hour

- Asleep, connected to tubes and monitors
- Family can have a short visit

1- 3 Hours

- Start to wake up
- Open eyes
- You will have a breathing tube and won't be able to talk

4- 6 Hours

- Check pain level, give more medication
- Remove breathing tube if breathing well

6+ Hours

- Family's second visit
- Can have ice chips after breathing tube is out
- Sit at edge of bed, hugging pillow (nurse will help)

Overnight

- Family visit after shift change. Leave when late
- Overnight doctor visit
- Medication, blood work and assessments done as needed

Next Morning

- Sit in chair for breakfast
- Surgeon visits and may remove chest tube
- ICU doctor and nurse check if ready for inpatient unit

Next Day

- Sit in chair for each meal
- Use sternal precautions when moving
- Start home medications

Qualitative feedback from caregivers ...

"Very good tip sheet as it shows you hour by hour based on what will happen in the CVICU"
"clear lots of people's minds."

"After the handout is given, everything is easier to understand"
"Great idea because people cannot internalize what they are hearing when they are stressed."

DISCUSSION

Education improved caregivers' self-rated knowledge of the post-operative CVICU care timeline.

Providing caregivers with education that informs them about the health and care of their loved-one, resulting in marked improvement in their knowledge of the post-operative process

Proven benefit of a short, easily digestible education resource as a tool to support caregiver knowledge

Positive trend towards self-perceived knowledge scores grounded in the CVICU pathway of care during the first 12-24 hours

RECOMMENDATIONS/ NEXT STEPS

1. Implement document into pre-operative patient educational packages
2. Extend pathway to other areas of care within the pathway
3. Extend to other surgical procedures

REFERENCES

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