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Evidence Informed Checklist Increase Patient Experience of Quietness During a Hospital Stay

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Evidence-Informed Checklist

Increase Patient Experience of Quietness During a Hospital Stay



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Introduction

I am a graduate student in the Master of Public Health Program at the Muskie School of Public Service at the University of Southern Maine. For my final “Capstone” project I created this user-friendly and evidence-informed checklist of ways a hospital can increase patient satisfaction during a hospital stay in regards to noise levels. By implementing as many items as possible on the checklist, staff at hospitals can likely increase Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CHAPS) survey scores. An extensive literature review of several databases was conducted. The strategies that were the most effective and cited the most often were listed on the checklist.

This checklist is made to be used by staff at hospitals, especially nurse managers and quality improvement specialists. A staff member can pick and choose what items on the checklist are feasible to implement within their organization. Ongoing quality improvement strategies are suggested in the checklist to remain abreast of ways to mitigate noise in hospitals. Dissemination activity included a presentation to nursing students at the University of Southern Maine, as well as a copy of the checklist and references being sent to the director of the Maine Association for Healthcare Quality.

Noise Reduction Strategies in Hospitals

Physical Environment

- ☐ Strive to have one patient per room.¹
- ☐ Have nursing shift changes at the patients' bedside and include the patient in the discussion rather than just outside the room.²
- ☐ Change the ceiling tiles periodically from sound reflecting to sound absorbing tiles allowing patients to sleep better.³
- ☐ Place signs and slogans throughout the hospital regarding quiet sounds for healing.⁴
- ☐ Display the location of offices and staff at the reception area, and provide directories on each floor to minimize the need for visitors and patients to ask for directions.⁵
- ☐ The Making Hospitals Quiet program: http://makinghospitalsquiet.com/evidence_for_change.php

Patient-Level Interventions

- ☐ Give earplugs to all patient upon admission, and train patients how to use them.⁶
- ☐ Provide headphones for patients to listen to their television in joint rooms.⁷
- ☐ Give patients, staff and visitors buttons that show a nurse with her finger to her lips, or buttons saying "Please remind me to speak softly."⁸
- ☐ Patient education upon admission that explains quiet times and visiting hours.⁹
- ☐ Silent Hospitals Help Healing (SHHH) program in New York: http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/health/2006-04-16-silence-heals_x.htm

Policies

- ☐ Provide guidance and instruction during staff education and employee orientation sessions on the importance of maintaining appropriate noise levels.¹⁰
- ☐ Implement a program to recognize hospital staff and/or departments that excel at providing and maintaining a noise-free environment.¹¹
- ☐ Training of admission and nursing staff on showing patients how to use earplugs, how to use nursing call bell, how to use the headphones for television.¹²
- ☐ Establish policies and procedures for managing alarms.¹³
- ☐ Overview of strategies to decrease noise in a hospital: http://www.hermanmiller.com/MarketFacingTech/hmc/research_summaries/pdfs/wp_Sound_Practices.pdf

Data Collection/Quality Improvement

- ☐ Evaluate the current hospital noise through patient satisfaction surveys.¹⁴
- ☐ Implement the Silent Hospitals Help Healing (SHHH) program and customize it.¹⁵
- ☐ Use sound meters to record ambient noise level at periodic times throughout the day.¹⁶
- ☐ Conduct a root-cause analysis in response to patient surveys about noise.¹⁷
- ☐ A matrix approach to help identify sources of noise: <http://www.isixsigma.com/industries/healthcare/reduce-and-optimize-hospital-noise-six-sigma-tools/>

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