Title: Real-Time Patient Experience Surveys of Hospitalized Medical Patients

Abstract:

Background: Hospitals are increasingly evaluated and incentivized on patient experience, but physicians do not routinely receive real-time feedback about their patients’ perceptions of their care. Real-time feedback could provide physicians the opportunity to address concerns and improve these perceptions.

Purpose: To evaluate if real-time feedback improves patient experience.

Methods: We performed a prospective, randomized quality improvement initiative. Patients were surveyed with three questions to rate their doctor(s) on listening, explaining, and being friendly/helpful. Included were English or Spanish-speaking patients admitted in the last 1-2 days to a hospitalist-led medicine team. Excluded were patients who refused, lacked capacity, were previously surveyed, or whose condition precluded participation. Subjects who did not give all “top box” (highest) scores on the first survey day were surveyed daily, until they gave all top box scores, were discharged, met exclusion criteria, or had been surveyed four consecutive days. Intervention patients’ attendings were given their patients’ survey responses, educated about Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) data and etiquette-based communication, and asked to revisit the patient to address their concerns, whereas attendings for control patients were not given results or asked to revisit the patient. The proportion of patients reporting top box scores on the daily survey was compared between groups. HCAHPS scores were also compared.

Results: Percentage of patients reporting top box scores on the first versus last survey day increased in both control and intervention groups for all questions, but there was no significant difference between groups. On the HCAHPS survey, median (95% CI) top box score for overall hospital rating was higher in the intervention group than in the control group [10 (9, 10) versus 9 (8, 10), p = 0.04] as were the percentiles of top box scores for the provider-specific questions and overall rating, i.e., communication from doctors: 60th versus 39th percentile; courtesy and respect of doctors: 88th versus 23rd percentile; doctors listening carefully to patients: 95th versus 57th percentile; overall hospital rating: 87th versus 6th percentile, p<0.01 for overall differences in percentiles.

Conclusion: Real-time feedback followed by coaching and patient revisits can improve patient experience.