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A Structured Communication and Team Training Program to Improve Perioperative Patient Safety

Abstract

Teamwork and communication training are critical to prevent miscommunications during handoffs of care that can lead to patient harm. The perioperative environment is distinctly susceptible to handoff errors due to the requirement of frequent, interprofessional handoffs of high-acuity patients. Previous perioperative handoff interventions have not included interprofessional education and training of all clinicians involved in each phase of the perioperative continuum (preoperative, intraoperative, and postoperative). Furthermore, training in teamwork skills (competencies) is often absent in handoff interventions. To address these critical problems and thereby improve patient safety, we will implement a novel handoff intervention for all perioperative clinicians by using team science-based training to complement and adapt a handoff program (I-PASS) that has successfully improved patient outcomes in nonoperative contexts.