



Massachusetts General Hospital

Take a Magnet Moment...

Issue 21

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What are Nursing Sensitive Indicators?

Nursing Sensitive Indicators are measures directly influenced by nursing care that hospitals use to evaluate nursing performance. This issue will provide key information about the measures and why they are important to the patient care provided each day.

Where did they come from?

The National Quality Forum (NQF) is the organization aggressively pursuing mechanisms that create accountability for quality improvement and clinical excellence. Established in 1999, the NQF is a private, nonprofit, public benefit corporation whose mission is to improve American healthcare through endorsement of consensus-based national standards for measurement and public reporting of healthcare performance data. The NQF has developed 15 nursing sensitive indicators comprised of 3 categories: patient-centered outcomes (e.g., falls), nursing-centered interventions (e.g., smoking cessation counseling) and system-centered measures (e.g., RN turnover).

Additional organizations that measure nursing sensitive indicators include NDNQI (National Database of Nursing Quality Indicators); Patients First (quality and safety public reporting initiative co-sponsored by the Massachusetts Hospital Organization and the Massachusetts Organization of Nurse Executives); CMS (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid); and the ANA (American Nurses Association).

What do we measure?

As part of our evidence for Magnet re-designation, we measure and report the nursing sensitive indicators identified by the American Nurses Association. These indicators are as follows:

Indicator	Description
Mix of RNs & unlicensed staff caring for patients in acute care settings	RN mix is calculated on a quarterly basis and sent to the NDNQI for comparison with other participating hospitals.
Total nursing care hours provided per patient day	Hours per patient day for RNs and unlicensed staff are calculated on quarterly basis and sent to the NDNQI for comparison with other participating hospitals. Data is also sent to Patients First for comparison to all hospitals in Massachusetts.
Pressure ulcers	MGH conducts a bi-annual Pressure Ulcer Prevalence Study. Data for the percentage of patients with hospital acquired pressure ulcers is calculated and sent to Patients First for comparison to all hospitals in Massachusetts.
Patient falls	The rate of patient falls (rate per 1,000 patient days) is monitored and reported on a quarterly basis to the NDNQI for comparison with other participating hospitals. Data is also sent to Patients First for comparison to all hospitals in Massachusetts.
Patient satisfaction with overall care	Indicators for satisfaction with overall care, nursing care, and pain management are measured through MGH's participation in the Consumer Assessment of Health Care Providers and Systems (CAHPS) Patient Satisfaction Survey. Beginning in March 2008, reports will present our performance in relationship to other hospitals.
Patient satisfaction with nursing care	
Patient satisfaction with pain management	
Patient satisfaction with educational information	The CAHPS survey also measures four indicators that deal with nurses communicating with patients about new medications and discharge needs.
Nosocomial infection rate	The MGH Infection Control Department monitors monthly rates for infections such as MRSA, VRE, <i>c.Diff</i> and line-associated bacteremias.
Staff nurse satisfaction	Staff Nurse satisfaction is measured through the annual Staff Perception of the Professional Practice Environment Survey.



Why are we doing this?

There is widespread and growing concerns about variation, and too often, inadequate quality of healthcare in the United States. Rising costs, medical errors, and inability to receive needed services are frequent topics in healthcare journals, newspapers, magazines, as well as television and radio reports. The public including patients, healthcare professionals, health organizations, payers and public policy makers want more information about how the healthcare system is performing as well as greater accountability and transparency of information.