

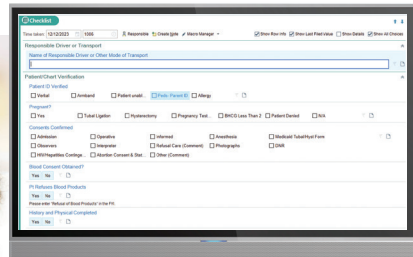


THE Lamp LIGHTER

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Smooth Surgical Experiences Start with Preparing Patients for Surgery

Surgery is a complex and delicate process, requiring meticulous preparation to ensure the safety and well-being of patients.



Methodist Hospitals surgical nurse educator Megan Gengo, BSN, RN, shed some light on the importance of proper patient preparation for surgery, emphasizing the use of pre-surgical checklists as a guiding tool in this critical process.

“The best practice for preparing patients for surgery involves the utilization of pre-surgical checklists integrated into the Epic electronic medical record system,” Megan said. “These checklists serve as standardized guides for nurses, streamlining the preparation process and minimizing the risk of errors.”

The comprehensive nature of the Epic pre-surgical checklists addresses various aspects of patient preparation, from verifying consent forms to ensuring patients adhere to NPO guidelines.

Nurses are reminded to make sure patients’ IV sites are functioning properly, obtain cardiac clearance for surgery from a cardiologist and to pay close attention

to patients’ medications, such as antihypertensives, diabetes medications and anticoagulants. Some of these medications may need to be held for surgery, based on doctor’s orders.

Megan also stressed the importance of removing food trays and water pitchers from patient rooms at midnight before that patient’s surgery day, as leaving such items could raise questions about a patient’s NPO status.

“Compliance with NPO guidelines is crucial to prevent complications during surgery, such as the risk of aspiration,” Megan said.

Common pre-surgery oversights include incomplete or inaccurate consent forms, as well as inadequate attention to the removal of jewelry and undergarments. These oversights, if not addressed, can lead to delays in surgery, incurring costs for Methodist Hospitals and potentially increasing patient anxiety.

“Delays in surgery are a costly consequence, both financially for Methodist and in terms of prolonged patient hospitalization,” Megan said. “The Epic pre-surgical checklists play a role in fostering teamwork, communication, and ultimately delivering quality care to patients.”

Pre-surgical checklists and physician order sets must be completed within 24 hours before the scheduled surgery. Failure to meet this timeframe can result in last-minute complications and, in some cases, surgery cancellations.

“By utilizing these checklists and addressing potential pitfalls, Methodist Hospitals nurses can enhance patient safety, reduce the risk of errors, and ultimately contribute to a more streamlined and cost-effective surgical process,” Megan said.

Revisiting Nursing Department Milestones in 2023

Now that 2023 is in the books, it's time to reflect on the remarkable journey we've taken together at Methodist Hospitals. Let's take a moment to acknowledge the year's events that were shaped, in large part, by the unwavering dedication and resilience of our nursing community.

Improving Patient Experience

Our Nursing Director of Surgical Services Tyra Martin, RN, BSN, MBA, MOL, made improving our patient leadership scores a priority in 2023. She launched four specific initiatives to improve patient experience including purposeful leader rounding, bedside shift reports, no pass zones and a patient experience competition.

STAR Center Opens

Methodist's new Sexual Trauma Awareness and Recovery (STAR) Center is located in a secure, private site near the Northlake Emergency Department. Led by SANE program manager Kelee Ivey, BSN, AAS, RN, SANE-A, the STAR Center provides 24/7 services to adult victims of sexual assault and abuse. It is supported by a grant from the Indiana State Department of Health, Division of Women's Health.

Reducing Average Length of Stay

In the first half of 2023, our hospital-wide efforts to reduce length of stay started to show signs of success. For example, our February 2023 length of stay was not only more than 16% lower than prior year, it was also at budget. That remarkable improvement is a testament to all our doctors, nurses and staff, including our expanded team of four Admission/Discharge nurses.

100 Years of Healing & Service

In June, Methodist Hospitals Foundation celebrated our health system's first 100 years of service to Northwest Indiana with a

black-tie gala at Hard Rock Casino Northern Indiana. More than 600 guests helped the Foundation raise more than \$600 thousand, including a \$100 thousand donation from US Steel Gary Works for its Vision Fund.

New UKG/Kronos Advanced Scheduling Module

We rolled out this extension of our current time-keeping system to take the guesswork out of scheduling while helping us to better anticipate staffing needs, improve productivity and deliver exceptional patient care. The UKG/Kronos Advanced Scheduling Module gives nurses a scheduling app through which they can view schedules, set preferences, manage availability, swap shifts, request coverage, sign up for additional shifts, arrange vacation time, stay up to date as schedules change, and more.

The Pathway to Excellence

We embarked on a journey to improve the quality of patient care by launching our quest to earn the prestigious Pathway to Excellence® designation from the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC). Our effort to earn Pathway to Excellence status really gets rolling in 2024. We are still inviting nurses to visit MethodistHospitals.org/SG to complete our online form to join a Shared Governance committee and help us build a better Methodist Hospitals.

Back to Basics

Methodist nurses were encouraged to return to the fundamentals of patient care to improve the human experience. To accomplish that, nurses were urged to make welcoming statements to patients, choose friendly, comforting words and compassionate tones when talking to patients, demonstrate empathy and practice positive framing.

2024 promises to be a great year for Methodist Hospitals. We're looking forward to celebrating another year of Nursing Department achievements.

Kristen Broadwater Named Home Health Manager

Methodist Hospitals is pleased to announce the appointment of Kristen Broadwater, RN, as Manager of Methodist Home Health.

Kristen, who took on the role in November, brings a wealth of experience to Methodist. Prior to joining us in March to work in home health intake, she previously served as the Director of Nursing for another home health agency. Prior to that, she served as a practice manager for the Northwest Health-Porter physician group.

Kristen aims to foster a collaborative and flexible team in her new role. She acknowledged Methodist Home Health's reputation for excellent care and is committed to building on that success.

As Methodist Hospitals looks forward to the positive impact of Kristen's leadership, nurses across the system are encouraged to collaborate closely with Home Health. Kristen's vision centers on a patient-centric approach, ensuring that every patient receives the care and attention they need in the comfort of their homes.



Congratulations Dr. Karol Wilcher

Methodist Hospitals applauds Dr. Karol Wilcher, DNP, MBA, RN, VA-BC, a member of our Northlake Vascular Access Team, for earning her Doctorate of Nursing Practice at Indiana Wesleyan University, where her clinical project was "Improving Nurses' Peripheral Intravenous Skills."

Please join us in congratulating Karol for earning this prestigious degree.

