

Category: Clinical Quality Improvement, patient safety and innovations

Title

Demographics of ePASS (Electronic Pre-Anaesthesia Self-Screening Questionnaire) responders vs non responders

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Aim(s)

Patients undergoing elective surgery in SGH receive preoperative anaesthesia risk assessment and counselling at the Preoperative Assessment Clinic (PAC). PAC's patient load has been rising steadily with no increase in doctor manpower, leading to long waiting times for anaesthesia consultation. Among patients attending PAC, 10% are low medical-risk patients undergoing low-risk surgery.

Thus, SGH has embarked on a project to identify "low-risk patients" who can have their anaesthesia assessment performed by trained nurses over-the-phone before their PAC appointment. These patients omit seeing an anaesthetist and appointment slots are allocated to higher-risk patients.

We analyzed the demographics of responders vs non responders in the initial ePASS responses, aiming to identify areas to improve on to increase response rates.

Methodology

The intervention comprises:

- 1) Development of an Electronic Pre-Anaesthesia Self-Screening (ePASS) questionnaire on FormSG
- 2) SMSes sent to patients for questionnaire submission.
- 3) Data from June 2020 was analyzed for demographics of responders vs non-responders.

Result

343 patients received ePASS - 253 responded (74%).

- The top three reasons for patients not responding were language barriers (41%), technical difficulties in form submission (19%), lack of devices (18%).
- Average duration of form completion was 8 minutes – (41% completed the form in 5 minutes or less.)
- Responders were slightly younger (59 vs 68 years old) and healthier (ASA 2 vs 2.5) with no significant difference in race.
- No clear trend in older patients requiring more time to fill up ePASS as they would tend to get assistance.

Conclusion

The ePASS questionnaire is a cost-effective and safe innovation to mitigate the rising workload at PAC. Main barriers to responses are language barriers and technical issues which can be easily overcome with the introduction of the form in different languages and improvements in accessibility of the form.