

To better handovers in SGH ICUs - Implementation of OT to ICU Handover Checklist

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Aim

Postoperative transition of care from operating theatres (OTs) to intensive care units (ICUs) is a **pivotal moment in the peri-operative care** of critically ill patients. Omission of key clinical details during handovers may result in suboptimal care and potential lapses in patient safety. Our team comprising of Anaesthetists and fellow nursing colleagues (from SICU, NICU, MICU and OT Anaesthesia), aimed to improve handover communication and completion rates of key information by 50%, through analysing current deficiencies and designing a standardised checklist to guide this process moving forward.

Methodology

Analysis via Fishbone Diagram concluded factors such as “interpersonal variability”, “frequently rotated staff” and “mercurial medical issues” contributed to poor handovers and we sought to address them. Completion rates of key information during handovers were collected from 1st Dec 2019 to 14th Jan 2020. Our “OT to ICU Handover Checklist” was then launched on 15th Jan 2020 with post-interventional data collected until 6th March 2020.

Results

In total, 52 post-operatively handovers to ICUs were evaluated. Pre-intervention, they achieved a median completion rate of 45.5% for key handover information, while they rose to 89.7% post-intervention. This represented an **improvement of 97%**, surpassing our goal of 50%. Analysis of the qualitative feedback statements showed statistically significant progresses across the board.

Conclusion

We have **incorporated this checklist into the department standard of practice**, expanding to Isolation ICU and Burns ICU as well. It is available on the Intranet for easier accessibility and reference. Its success validates our belief in the merits of effective inter-professional communication and sustained systems improvement. We hope for continued support from our fellow colleagues to achieve better patient care together.

**"Effective teamwork begins and ends
with good communication"**

Transferring a patient to ICU postop?



- *available in all MOT induction rooms
- *for all SICU, MICU, Burns ICU and Isolation ICU transfers