



## INTRODUCTION

It is vital for emergency department nurses to accurately triage diverse patient populations. The literature supports under-triaging contributes to delays in time-sensitive interventions which leads to patient's clinical deterioration, morbidity, and mortality. Clinical observations and real-time chart auditing identified a knowledge gap among emergency nurses between application of the Emergency Severity Index (ESI) and accurate patient acuity settings. To close the knowledge gap, emergency nurses need to accurately apply the Emergency Severity Index (ESI) tool, set accurate acuity levels and avoid potential poor patient outcomes.

## PURPOSE/OBJECTIVES

To develop and implement a system-wide standardized triage educational competency class to improve the accuracy in setting patient acuity levels with proper application of the Emergency Severity Index (ESI) among emergency nurses in one organization.

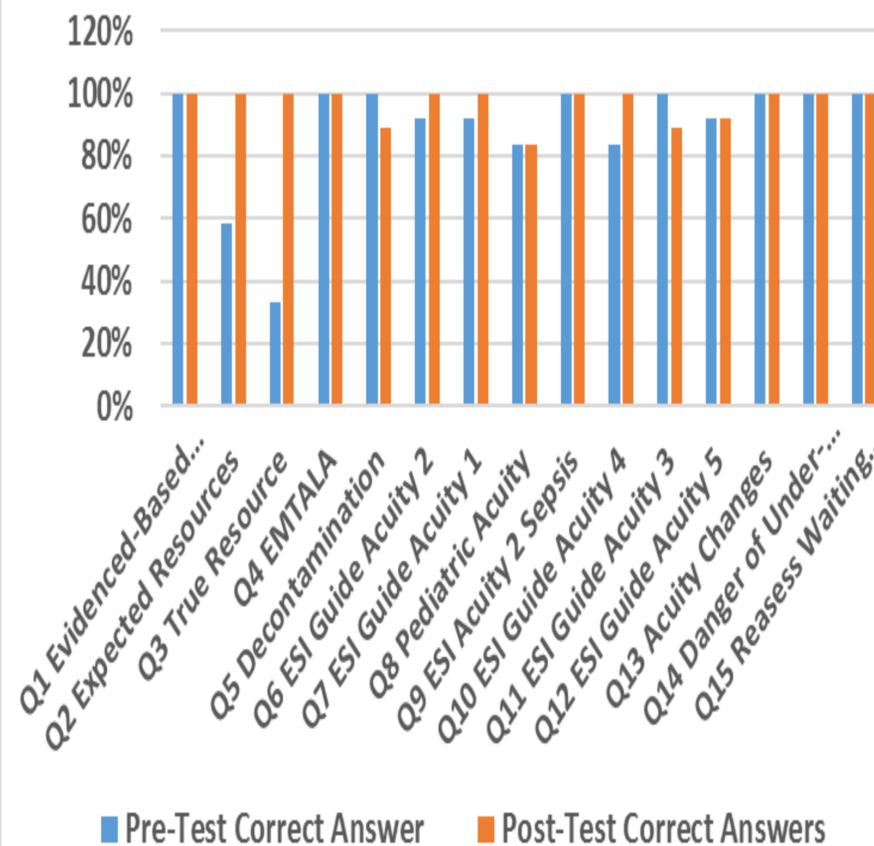
- Define the purpose and components of triage.
- Comprehend the Emergency Severity Index (ESI) algorithm to set the appropriate patient acuity levels.
- Evaluate the nurse's triage competency in setting accurate triage levels with pre and post class tests.

## INTERVENTIONS

Developed and implemented a system-wide standardized triage education and competency class consisting of:

- Pilot Triage Class – 2 hour time-frame
- 13 Emergency nurses from five ED sites
- Educational didactic: Power Point Presentation
- Video Simulations – Patient Case Scenarios
- Recognize and assign accurate acuity levels
- Pre-test link sent to each participant
- Participant Educational Binder
- Triage Educational Resource Guide
- Triage Badge Buddy
- Post-Test completion
- Participant received 2.0 CE hours

## Pre and Post Triage Test Results



## FINDINGS/OUTCOMES

- **41.67% increase in understanding ESI identified resources post class.**
- **66.67% increase in the identification of an actual resource using the ESI tool.**
- **11.11% decrease in decontamination process.**
- **8.33% increase understanding how long a patient should wait to see a physician based on the Emergency Severity Index Tool.**
- **16.67% increase in recognizing an acuity 4 based on the Emergency Severity Index Algorithm and resources.**

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## IMPLICATIONS

- Impacted the current emergency nurse's knowledge of how to utilize and understand assignment of accurate ESI acuity levels.
- Influences three spheres of influence: the patient, the nurse and nursing practice, and the health care organization.
- Bridges gap of utilization of the ESI and improving accuracy in triage acuity levels.
- Impacts throughput by accurately triaging patients.
- Participants showed an increase in triage education, understanding ESI algorithm, and accurately assigning acuity levels with comparison of the pre- and post-triage test.

## CONCLUSION

The conclusion showed standardization of a triage education and competency class has improved the knowledge gap between nurses, ESI, and setting accurate acuity settings. The pilot triage class gained insight from participants and future triage opportunities. Post pilot class a follow-up with emergency department leaders and recommendations were made for physician education of the ESI, add triage class to ED nursing orientation, and develop a plan for on-going triage education.

## REFERENCES

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