

Introduction

- Acuity on general wards has amplified putting patients at increased risk for experiencing deterioration requiring interventions from the Rapid Response Team (RRT).
- Despite RRTs success, many barriers still exist, and high stress situations like these are ripe with opportunity for communication breakdowns.
- Bridging the gap across departments and professions is essential to promoting a healthy work environment and improving patient outcomes.

Purpose

- Implement a standardized protocol for escalation and activation of RRT, use debriefing, and a follow-up guide following the TeamSTEPPS® conceptual framework to improve communication, teamwork, and collaboration among interprofessional team members.

Methods

- A SWOT analysis revealed there was a lapse of education regarding RRTs over the past 7 years, a lack of awareness of the RRT activation criteria, and an unclear escalation procedure.
- Interprofessional team members reported poor communication, role confusion, lack of accountability, increased fear and anxiety to activate the RRT, and there were recent episodes of lateral violence.
- An interprofessional task force was created to evaluate the current rapid response process and create a new protocol based on evidence-based practice from the TeamSTEPPS® conceptual framework.
- Interprofessional team members were surveyed to describe their experiences during rapid response events.
- Baseline data was established after reviewing all rapid response events for the previous two years.
- A mock simulation was used to finalize details of the new protocol prior to implementation.
- Education and staff resources were provided to interprofessional team members who respond to rapid response events.
- Data collected throughout the trial was obtained through debriefing surveys, incident reports, paging call log, Cerner documentation, and formal and informal conversations with interprofessional team members.
- Following implementation, focus groups were offered and interprofessional team members were re-surveyed to provide feedback on the new protocol.

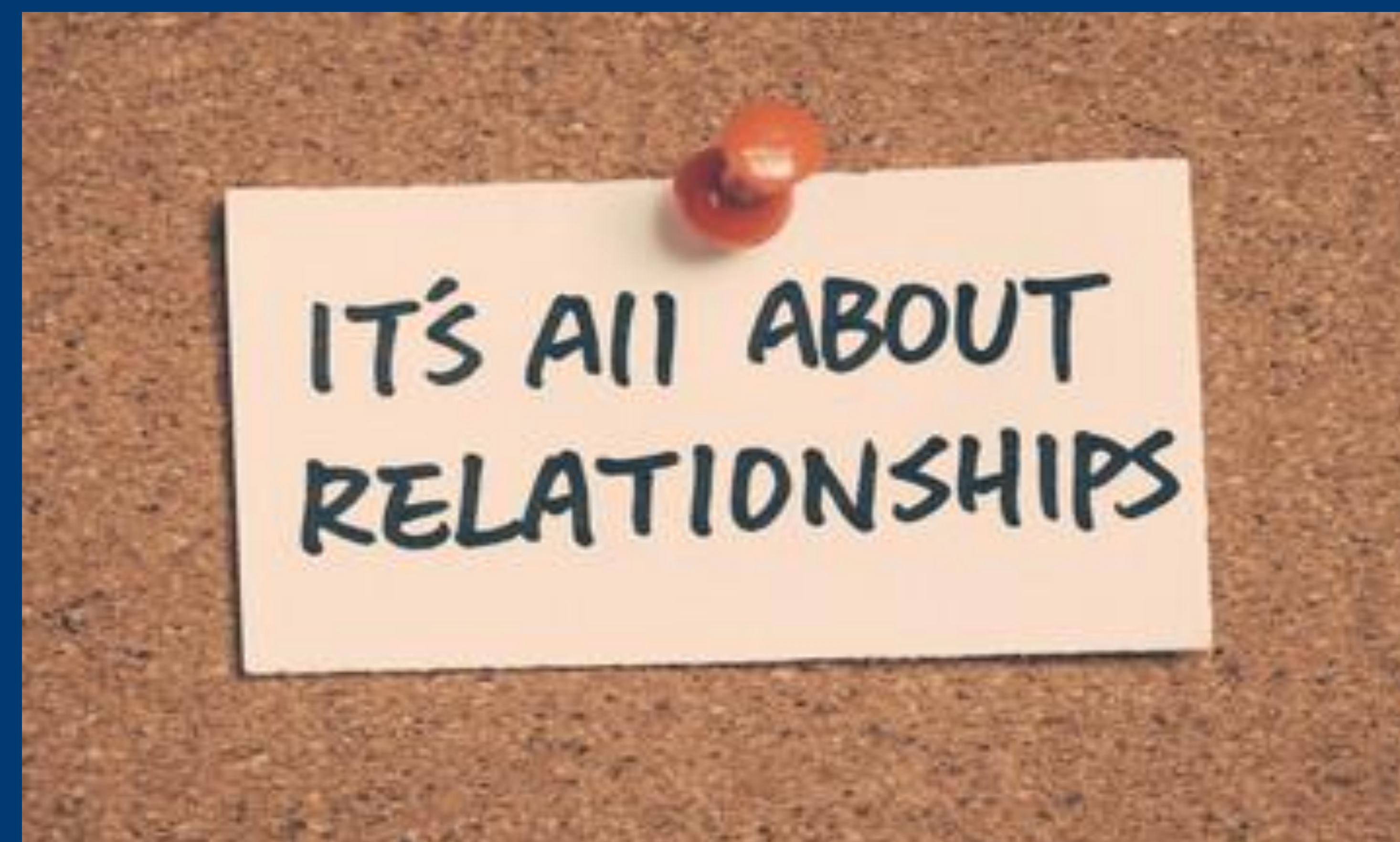


Patient outcomes can be improved through reducing barriers associated with RRTs by cultivating strong non-technical skills and fostering a healthy work environment.



Take a picture to learn more

Photography Encouraged



Acknowledgements: Thank you to the institutional staff and leadership who participated and supported this initiative.

Results

- Education provided structure, clarified roles and functions during rapid response events, and increased awareness of policies and procedures within the organization.
- The new protocol empowered nurses to use "local" resources prior to activating the RRT and complete early interventions.
- Enhanced non-technical skills demonstrated an improvement in relationships and decreased lateral violence across departments and professions.
- Communication, teamwork, and collaboration were enriched as interprofessional team members fostered a healthy work environment by focusing on patient-centered care and valuing the expertise of others.
- Debriefing was introduced, creating a new opportunity to build relationships, increase knowledge, and provide constructive feedback.

Recommendations

- Yearly education, training, and evaluation of the RRT and events is essential for improving patient outcomes and ongoing quality improvement.
- Develop strong non-technical skills to enhance interprofessional relationships and performance during rapid response events.
- Establishing a leader during rapid response events encourages clear, closed-loop communication, teamwork, and collaboration.
- Having a shared mental model promotes safe, high-quality patient care and improves patient outcomes.
- Debriefing creates a safe space for interprofessional team members to reflect on rapid response events, provide constructive feedback, and generate practice changes from lessons learned.
- Cultivation of a healthy work environment is essential for success.
- Leadership plays a key role in disseminating information to team members.

Conclusions

- The TeamSTEPPS® conceptual framework provides an excellent foundation for improving RRTs.
- Fostering a healthy work environment and developing strong non-technical skills decreases barriers to activating the RRT and improving patient outcomes.
- Dissemination of information from leadership is crucial to alerting team members of policy and procedural changes.