

Surviving MI

AN ACC QUALITY INITIATIVE

Strategies for Having Specialized Nurses for the Cardiac Catheterization Lab

Dedicating a specific pool of nurses to the catheterization laboratory as opposed to cross-training nurses from the intensive care unit (ICU) is associated with better performance in the care of patients with AMI.

CHALLENGES THAT MAY ARISE IF NURSES ARE CROSS TRAINED BETWEEN CATH LAB AND ICU

- Limitations and delays in implementing complex procedures in emergencies because of a lack of experience in the cath lab among team members.
- Lack of direct and efficient communication that is developed through time and trust.
- Inability to develop deep familiarity with routines and ways of working under pressure and time urgency.
- Lack of confidence among team members that the nurse is capable of problem solving and trouble shooting.
- Limited familiarity and experience with the use of complex devices.
- Fewer opportunities to develop collaborative relationships with staff.

STRATEGIES TO CONSIDER IF CROSS-TRAINING IS NECESSARY

- Establish standards for the cath lab inventory, procedures, etc. in the form of checklists.
- Establish a system to assist cross-trained nurses with location of frequently used medications, supplies and resources available, if needed.
- Maintain documentation on common cath lab drugs and how they are mixed and administered (<1 page per drug) to serve as a reference for nurses who are not familiar with the location of drugs and supplies.
- Provide patient flow diagrams that emphasize key points necessary to effectively working in the cath lab.
- Have all cross-trained nurses work the same day/shift weekly in the cath lab to foster familiarity with routines and promote staff relationships.

STRATEGIES TO INCLUDE CARDIOVASCULAR TECHS AND NURSES ON CATH LAB TEAM

- Encourage team concept with those most familiar with the cath lab environment taking lead in the coordination of care in the lab.
- Have frequently used medications and supplies readily available for emergent cases.
- Maintain a checklist with frequently used medications and supplies needed for resuscitation, phone numbers for specialty services (i.e., pharmacy, anesthesia, etc).

References

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