An Exploratory Study of Variability in Safety Culture among Clinician types and Patient Care Experience

1 Background

- Safety and quality have become increasingly important in health care due to critical examination of preventable error (IOM, 1999), and prioritization of patient centered care as a potential predictor of improved health outcomes, reduced costs, and retention of patients as health care consumers.

- Patient satisfaction as a potential safety and quality outcome has not been extensively explored. The purpose of the current study was to (a) examine how different types of care providers viewed the safety culture of their unit, and (b) examine the relationship between hospital safety culture and patient satisfaction.

2 Methods

- Secondary analysis of data from 2011 Safety Attitudes Questionnaire (SAQ) data and Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS).

- SAQ domains of primary interest: Safety Climate and Teamwork Climate.

- HCAHPS domains of primary interest: Patient satisfaction measures of communication with Nurses, communication with Physicians, and overall responsiveness of hospital staff.

3 Results


- No significant correlations.

- Given the small sample size results were in the hypothesized positive direction for physician communication (i.e. as perceptions of climate increased, so did the percentage of patients who indicated that their physician always communicated well).

- Results were in the opposite direction however for nurse communication (i.e. as clinician perceptions of climate increased, the percentage of patients who indicated that their nurse communicated well decreased).

4 Conclusions

- Physicians perceive higher teamwork and safety climate than other clinicians and staff.

- As perceptions of climate increased, so did the percentage of patients who indicated their physician always communicated well; as perceptions of climate increased, the percentage of patients who indicated that their nurse communicated well decreased.

- Safety climate nor teamwork climate were significantly related to perceptions of nurse communication.

- Clinician perceptions of senior management was significantly related to patient perceptions of physician communication.

- As clinician and staff perceptions of working conditions in their work area became more positive, so too did patient perceptions of staff responsiveness.

5 Limitations

- Extremely small sample size.

- Representative nature of HCAHPS data and relevance to generalized experiences or only those most notable.

6 Future Directions

- Further investigation into the relationship between clinician perceptions of leadership engagement and support for patient safety and patient care experience.

- Directionality of the findings encourage further research examining the impact of interdisciplinary care and patient safety outcomes.

7 References


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