

Meghan Hayes, FULD Fellow Cohort II



The Cardiac Surgery Translational Research Project (CSTS) is a quality improvement project of the Armstrong Institute for Patient Safety and Quality. The goals are to reduce the mortality, morbidity, and costs of care for cardiac surgery patients using a unit-based model. The CSTS project is examining surgical site infection rates, central line associated bloodstream infections, and safety hazards during patient handoffs from OR to ICU, through hospital discharge. Under Dr. Mahiyar Nasarwanji mentorship, I analyzed OR to ICU handoffs using qualitative methods to code observational data collected over one year in five US hospitals. The team used the Systems Engineering Initiative for Patient Safety (SEIPS) model to evaluate factors that influence effective, safe handoffs. These included organizational and environmental factors, technology/tools, tasks, and persons. The qualitative results will be used to inform the development of a standardized safety tool checklist.

I am currently a BSN candidate for December 2013. In 2009 I graduated from Baylor University with a B.S.Ed. in Community Health. Later, I managed a free clinic for the uninsured of the Waco, TX community. I continued my interest in public health and completed a MPH in 2012. I have worked both domestically and abroad implementing health promotion and education programs for diverse patient populations with both chronic and infectious disease diagnoses.

Through my experiences I have consistently found that our knowledge and skills as healthcare professionals is ineffective and potentially harmful if safety and quality of care is not a priority. As facilities experience increases in patients and nursing shortages leading to higher patient ratios for nursing, quality and safety cannot be jeopardized. Research and evidence-based tools to decrease avoidable errors and increase efficiency and effectiveness of care are imperative.

My goal is to continue the passion that the Fuld Program has ignited in me to promote quality and safety in the cardiac patient population through employment on a cardiac step-down unit. I plan to participate in cardiac surgery research as both a bedside nurse and patient advocate on an interdisciplinary team to provide optimum patient care.