

Abstract

Objective: Research shows that a lack of preoperative education and guidance about the postoperative recovery process leads to many questions as evidenced by patient emails, phone calls, and low patient satisfaction scores. The purpose of this quality improvement project was to assess the impact of enhanced preoperative education bundle (EPEB) for patients undergoing rotator cuff repair (RCR).

Methods: A pre-post intervention study was conducted at a single outpatient clinic in an urban area in the Mid-Atlantic. Thirty-five patients who underwent RCR with conventional preoperative education were tracked via retrospective chart review. A second group of thirty-five patients who underwent RCR received the EPEB and then had the surgery. The EPEB consisted of postoperative care: pain management, physical activity restrictions and home exercises. Descriptive statistics, independent t-tests, and Mann-Whitney U tests were used to assess mean differences on patient satisfaction, number of emails and phone calls to providers, and the amount of time spent emailing and calling patients.

Results: Participants in the intervention group had patient satisfaction scores 4.34 points higher than those in the non-intervention group. We found that the number of emails and phone calls decreased in the intervention group, by as much as .6 emails and 1 phone calls, on average; with each email and phone call lasting an average of 3.69 and 1.77 minutes, this equated to a large time savings for providers. We found a modest drop in emails (11.4%) and a large drop in phone calls (31.4%) since implementing the intervention.

Conclusion: This quality improvement project demonstrated the EPEB reduced patient emails and phone calls, thereby reducing providers' time spent responding to patients, all while increasing patient satisfaction. Interventions that incorporate preoperative education and guidance about the postoperative recovery process can be effective for rotator cuff repair patients.