

Effectiveness of a Hand-Off Communication Form on Improving Interdisciplinary

Collaboration and Standardizing Discharge Education



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Introduction & Background

- Tracheostomy: an artificial airway for critically ill patients in respiratory failure²
- Meticulous home care required to prevent manageable adverse events (accidental dislodgement, infection, and respiratory distress)¹
- Academic medical center in the Midwest:
 - Lack of communication/care coordination surrounding tracheostomy discharge education
 - Documentation inconsistencies
- Evidence-Based Solution^{3,4,8}
 - Team-based care
 - Standardized protocols
 - Education
 - Patient/caregiver involvement



Purpose & Aims

Purpose: Evaluate whether the implementation of a hand-off communication form among health care professionals caring for adult (>18 years) tracheostomy patients on an acute care surgical unit will increase the teams understanding of the patient's discharge process and enhance communication.

Aim 1

➤ Increase the health care professional's understanding of the adult tracheostomy patient's discharge education plan

Aim 2

➤ Increase communication regarding discharge education among health care professional's caring for adult tracheostomy patients

Aim 3

➤ To assess health care professional's satisfaction with utilizing the hand-off form

Methods

- **Design:**
 - Pre-Post Quality Improvement Project
- **Sample:**
 - Healthcare professionals on a surgical unit: Nurses (n=69) and Respiratory Care Practitioners (n=135)
 - Adult (> 18 years) tracheostomy patients on a surgical unit
- **Setting:**
 - 28 bed, adult surgical-telemetry acute care unit
 - Primary Patient Population: Non-Trauma Emergency, Otolaryngology, Head/Neck Cancer Reconstruction
- **Intervention:**
 - Hand-Off Communication Form^{3,6}: standardized process that facilitates communication and serves as a method to document education
 - Focuses on: proper hand hygiene, skills competencies, & emergency preparedness
- **Procedures:**



Education

Pre-Survey

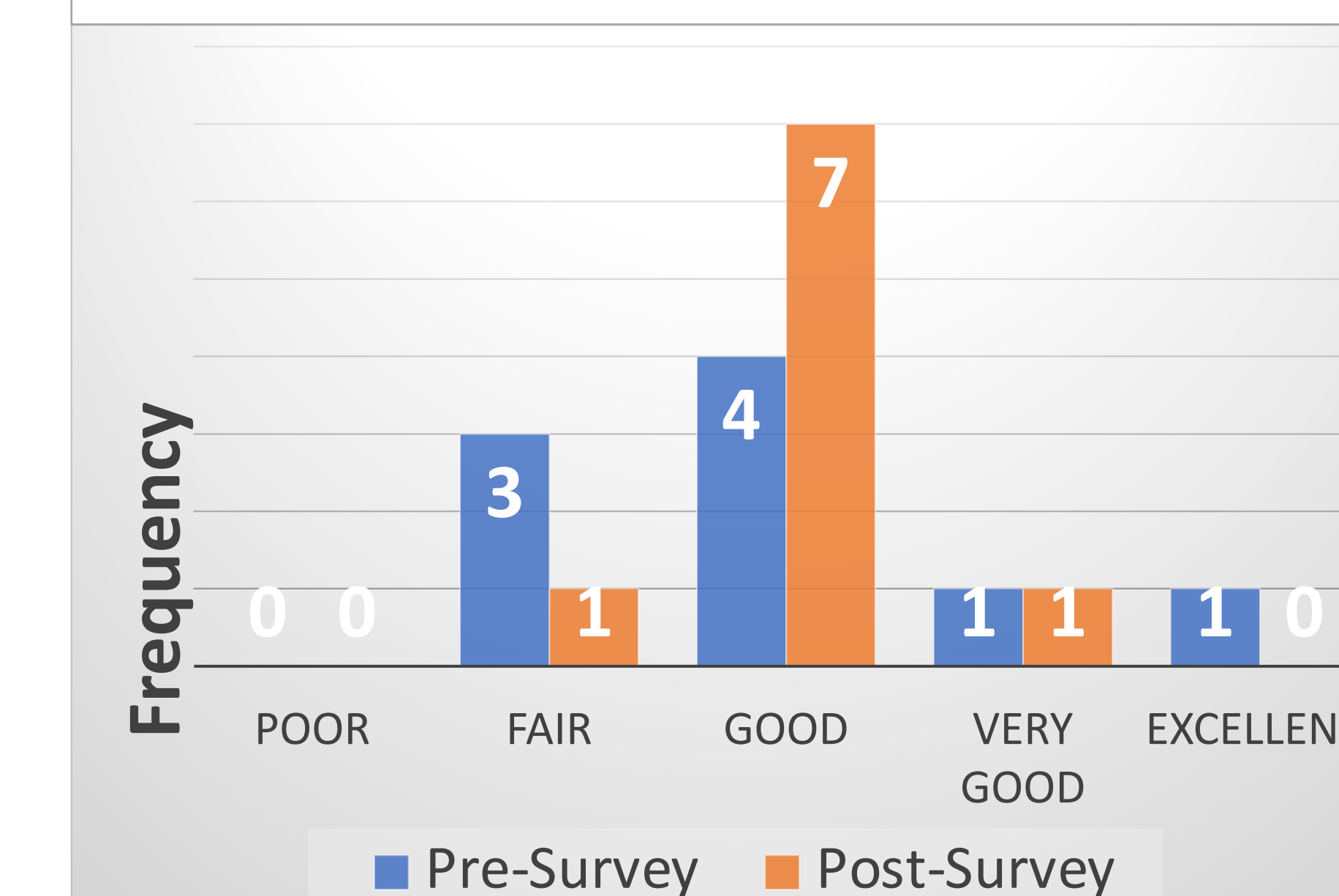
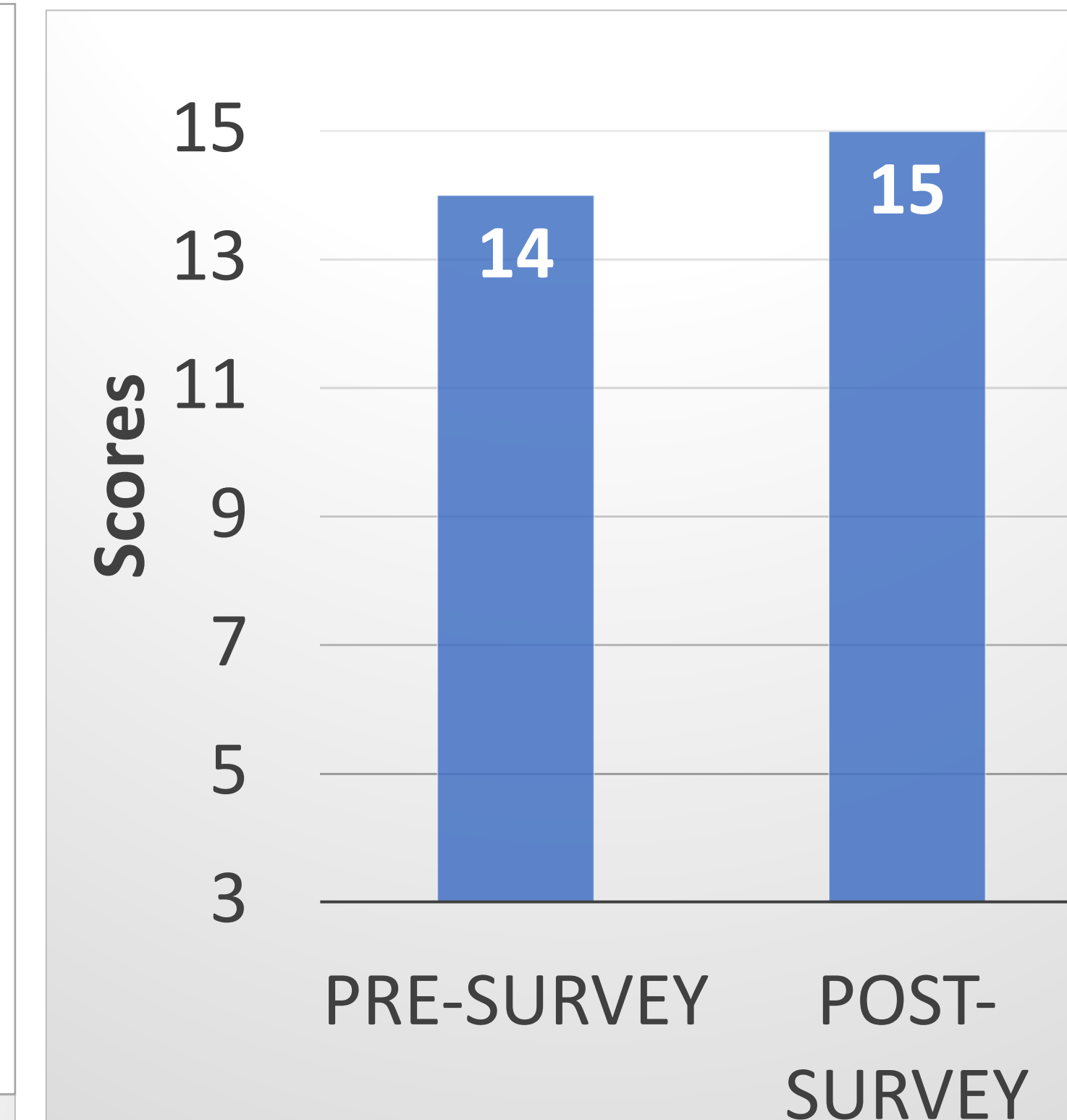
Intervention

Post-Survey

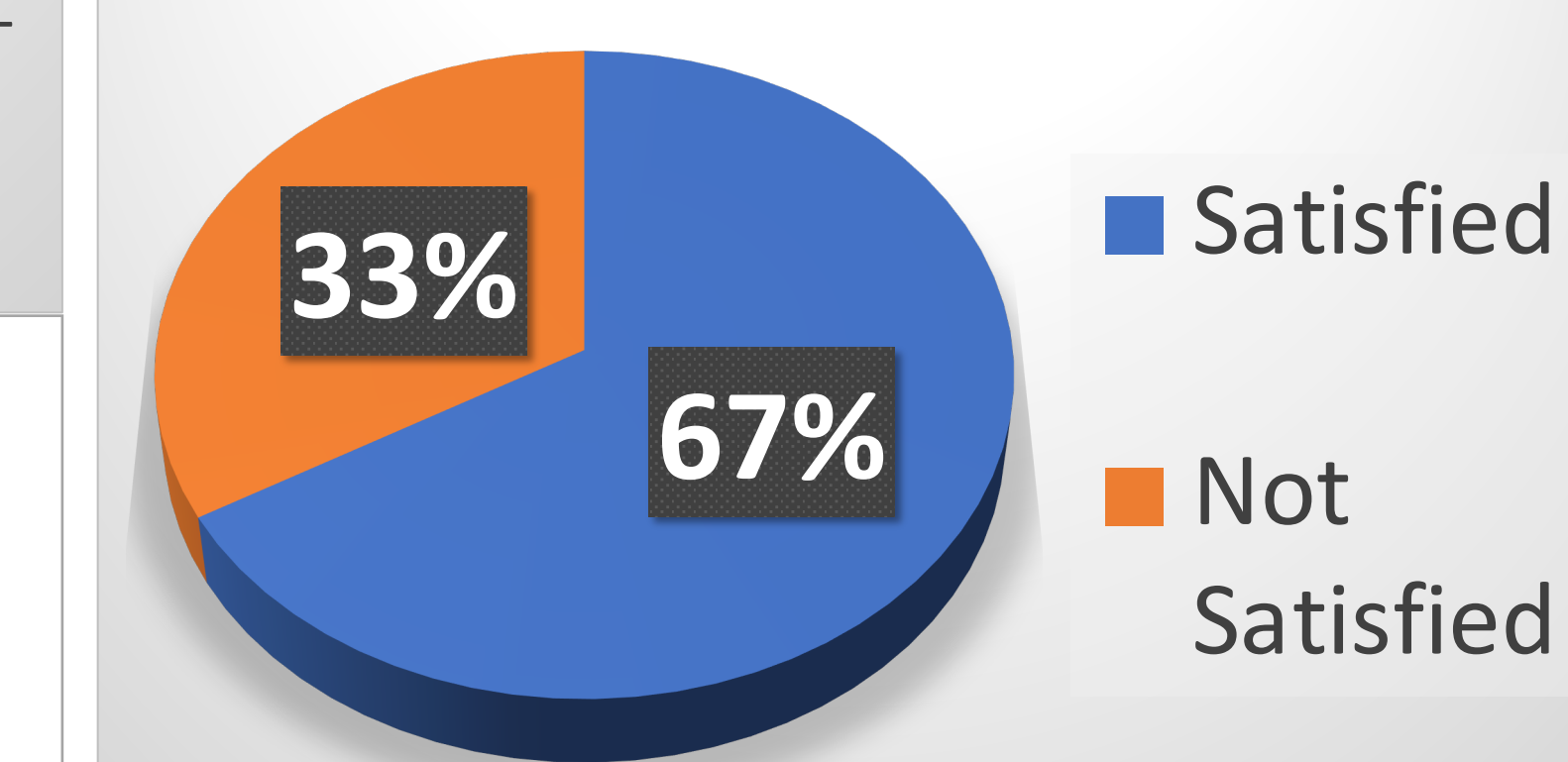
- RedCAP: 5-question pre-survey and a 7-question post-survey⁵
- 1st session: Staff introduced the educational topic
- 2nd session: Staff demonstrated skill
- 3rd session: Patient/Caregiver returned demonstration
- Weekly Audits

Results

- Following 12-week implementation: Nurses (n=9) demonstrated a small improvement (median score of 14 vs.15) in the understanding of the discharge plan
- Results from a Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test (Z= -.105, p= 0.916) did not elicit a statistically significant change



- Majority of the nurses reported good (n=7) and very good (n=1) communication among team members



- 66.67% (n=6) of the nurses reported satisfaction with the tool and were interested in continuing to use the form

Conclusion

- A standardized discharge education protocol may:
 - Possibly serve as a prerequisite to successfully prepare tracheostomy patients for a safe transition to home
 - Positively impact the healthcare provider's understanding of the discharge plan and encourage team members' communication
- Next Steps: Transform tool into EMR



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