

Nursing update



Making patient safety a priority – every day

Chrissy Morgan, RN, who is serving as a relief charge nurse in the IMC unit at Via Christi Hospital St. Joseph, recently was tasked with helping fill out the daily patient safety checklist and found it a “real eye-opener.”

While familiar with how things are supposed to work, putting it to use proved informative and helpful.

But, she asked Carla Yost, system chief nursing officer, an interesting question during leadership rounding: “Why is it that we always seem to care more about safety around the time we’re expecting The Joint Commission?”

The answer is that we shouldn’t. We should keep our house in order each and every day and the daily Making Patient Safety a Priority Every Day checklist is designed to help us do so.

“The 29 elements on the list represent our basic expectations for the safe, quality care that every patient deserves,” says Yost, who compiled and shared the checklist in April with the expectation that it be completed and signed off on in all units on a daily basis. “Our goal is to reduce clinical variation and one of the ways we can do that is by ensuring that we are consistent in our approach to basic controllable environmental factors that can impact patient safety.”

It consists of simple daily and weekly checks, along with monthly measures—providing a guide to basic expectations and a way to ensure transfer of that knowledge to those who may be new to nursing or a particular unit.

Says Chrissy: “I would like to see everyone, including resource nurses, have the opportunity to put the tool use. It’s one thing to see it — putting it into practice is totally different. ”

Doing it a couple of times helps it to become natural routine, she says.

Yost agrees, noting that making safety a priority each and every day is a habit is precisely why the tool was developed.

“It’s everyone’s responsibility to see that all 29 elements are being consistently met and to elevate any barriers to doing so at the daily Safety Huddle,” she says. “Having someone sign off that this has been done also makes sure that we’re holding ourselves accountable to providing the level of safety that we would want and expect for ourselves and our own families.”

Way to represent!

Julianna Rieschick, chief nursing officer at Via Christi Hospital St. Joseph, has been appointed by the governor to the Kansas State Board of Nursing. Congratulations, Julianna!

