



Nursing, RT teamwork paying off for cardiac patients

One of the posters at the recent RN Residency Clinical Excellence Day detailed the benefits -- and the CTICU at Via Christi Hospital St. Francis' success with -- early extubation of patients following coronary artery bypass graft surgery.

It's a message worth sharing and emulating with all post-surgical patients on a vent, says system chief nursing officer Carla Yost.

Hospitals that use post-surgical protocols and standardized order sets to reduce patients' time on a ventilator have seen improved patient outcomes. Meeting the established six-hour goal for post-surgery extubation has been shown to reduce the risk of ventilator-associated pneumonia and lower patient morbidity and mortality rates. It also has been shown to decrease the length of time spent in the ICU and overall hospital length of stay, resulting in a decreased cost of care.

As part of Via Christi's protocol, anesthesia is reducing the amount of narcotics given at the end of a surgical case. Nurses are watching for signs that a patient may be ready to be weaned off the vent, continually communicating with Respiratory Therapy while the patient is intubated, and immediately notifying their RT colleagues when the patient is a candidate for a spontaneous breathing trial.

"It's not a change that can be made overnight or one that can be made by a single individual or department," said Sarah Marko, RN, nurse manager for CTICU, as it requires collaboration on the part of anesthesia, Nursing and Respiratory Therapy.

"It takes a concentrated effort, communication and teamwork, but it's worth it."

Compliments from our food service partner

Tawny Sandifer, chief nursing officer at Via Christi Hospital in Pittsburg, also had an example of awesome teamwork and departmental collaboration worth sharing.

Jamie Berberich, RN, and Neely Henry, CNA, went out of their way to assist Food Unit Lead Becky Keller on the Medical Surgical unit, according to George Burns, TouchPoint Food and Nutrition..

"As a team, they quickly gowned up and went into the isolation patients rooms to deliver the food trays ensuring timely delivery of the food," says Burns. "They both showed great respect for other departments and we want to recognize them for their great attitude they displayed."

Way to represent, Jamie and Neely!