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REDUCING THE USE OF DISPOSABLE SATURATION PROBES IN THEATRE: A COST-SAVING INITIATIVE

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Introduction:

Great Ormond Street Hospital is the largest paediatric centre in the UK with approximately *** children undergoing general anaesthesia for diagnostic and therapeutic procedures annually.

In 2016, an audit showed 65% of patients undergoing general anaesthesia had a new disposable saturation probe at a cost of £46,400 per year.

With rising probe prices, we saw the opportunity to evaluate probe usage and reduce costs.

Aims:

1) To evaluate the usage of disposable saturation probes in theatre.

2) To reduce the unnecessary usage of these probes

Method:

A baseline snapshot audit was conducted to evaluate the usage of disposable probes during a patients' journey through the theatre complex. Quality improvement methods were used to implement measures to improve use of reusable saturation probes whilst reducing access to and the inappropriate use of disposable probes.

Measures included engagement and education of all staff within the theatre complex around probe choice dependent on patient age and size. Reduced accessibility of disposable probes by redesigning the stocking of the pre-assessment, anaesthetic rooms and recovery. Reusable probes were purchased for all areas and a team approach was used to ensure these probes were returned to the theatre complex.

Results:

Initial audit results showed that 65% of patients used a new disposable saturation probe whilst in the theatre complex. Of these, 75% were used inappropriately.

After 3 PDSA cycles re-audit showed that disposable saturation probes were used inappropriately on only 7% of our patients. This resulted in an average cost-reduction of £8,700 per month since implementation.

Conclusion:

In the age where cost-saving and reduction of waste are key features of considerate healthcare, we have shown that with education of staff and appropriate provision of equipment, it is possible to reduce the usage of disposable saturation probes to generate significant departmental cost savings.