Project Description and Goals

The competent emergency nurse must be the jack of all trades, master of most. Today it is more common for the new graduate nurse to start their career in a critical care setting which requires a large skill and knowledge set. The pocket card is a well-established resource for healthcare providers and complements the “Just-in-Time” education model which was adapted from the business world and is based on the concept that learning is facilitated and confidence improves when the education or educational resource is provided when it is most needed. Confidence and knowledge are imperative, especially for new nurses, to promote patient safety.

A simple search of the American Association of Critical Care Nurses (AACN) or Amazon.com will net you multiple results for nursing resources in the pocket card format. The issues are the cost of the cards, specific cards needed on different units and storing the pocket cards in an easily retrievable location.

Goals:

1. Establish a mechanism for “just in time” education for the clinical staff in the emergency department.

2. Improve the nurse’s confidence level when performing clinical tasks.

3. Assist with standardizing practice that is consistent with best practice and sources of evidence.

Process and Solution:

The informatics age has brought desktop publishing to the educators. Of the little research existing concerning the benefits of pocket cards, two separate studies showed statistically significant confidence, knowledge retention, and procedural compliance when pocket cards were used consistently. The development of unit or facility based pocket cards can be initiated by the front line nurse, identification of compliance issues from chart audits, or management request. The educator identifies the topic, specific resource needed and develops an evidence-based draft of the pocket card in a standardized Microsoft Word format. The pocket card may have multiple versions as educators, managers and directors provide feedback before a final edition is printed. Pocket cards are printed in-house on plain cardstock and cut into cut into pocket size by the print shop. Many commercial companies also provide pocket cards free of
charge for their products. The pocket cards are displayed in the break room in a clear shoe rack hung over the door.

1. Identify topics needed for pocket cards in the emergency department
2. Utilize sources of evidence and best practices in the development of the pocket cards
3. Develop and reproduce the pocket cards based on selected topics
4. Develop pocket card center (Storage of the pocket cards on the units for easy retrieval)
5. Evaluate the use of pocket cards and expand to additional units throughout the hospital as appropriate

Measurable Outcomes

Following implementation of the pocket card resource center, Nurses were surveyed in the emergency department to determine if cards were being used frequently, and if the nurses found them useful. Five questions were posed, and nurses were asked to rate them on a 5 point Likert scale. Nineteen responses were received (n=19).

Below are the questions posed and the average Likert score.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Average Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I understand the concept of a pocket card</td>
<td>4.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Pocket cards are used frequently to complete my assigned duties</td>
<td>3.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Pocket cards are useful to me</td>
<td>4.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The pocket cards available on my unit are relevant to my practice</td>
<td>4.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. My unit has a designated place to store pocket cards so that they are easily accessible.</td>
<td>4.89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above results represent that nurses feel positively about the pocket cards, can locate them easily, and use them in their practice. Comments from the surveys include multiple requests for additional cards and the use of the pocket cards by EMS providers. The pocket card center holds more than 20 cards. The pocket cards which have had to be refilled include high risk medication verification; 12 lead ECG placement; Right Side & Posterior ECG placement, which validates the need for just in time education.
Based on the success of the pocket card resource in the Emergency Department, there have been requests house wide for pocket cards from both clinical and nonclinical areas such as Spiritual Care. Clinicians will utilize educational tools that are simple and easily available more frequently. A simple tool such as a pocket card is effective in leading to practice changes.4

Sustainability

Pocket card usage has spread to other departments. Clinical practice educators can easily update cards to include practice changes have a short turnaround time on printing. As cards become outdated new cards can be developed, reflecting the latest evidence-based practice. A frequent question heard on the clinical units and in the Department of Education & Research is “do we have a pocket card for that?”

Role of Collaboration and Leadership

The content and focus of pocket cards requires the active participation of all members of the staff. Pocket cards have become so popular that often EMS providers will come in and “shop” from the resource center. Pocket cards have been developed for all disciplines to include ED patient care technicians (PCT), RN’s and physicians. Work is being done with Infection Control to develop an isolation pocket card. Following the success and popularity of the pocket cards in the Emergency Department, other clinical unit managers began to collaborate with their assigned clinical practice educators to identify which resources would benefit their individual units.

Innovation

With the purchase of a clear over the door shoe rack a resource center to provide “Just-in-Time” education to the front line staff. This resource center provides a location for commercial as well as unit or division specific pocket cards or trifolds. The clear pockets allow the staff to be able to quickly identify which card is needed, and its location in the break room makes it readily available to staff as they come on and go off shift. These innovations have lead to widespread use and satisfaction among the staff of the Emergency Department.
Related Tools and Resources

An Example of a Pocket Card Available in the Emergency Department

Adapted from ENA’s TIP’s Right and Posterior ECG
Department of Education & Research 10/13

Right-sided ECG Electrode Placement

- **V₁R**: 4th intercostal space, left sternal border
- **V₂R**: 4th intercostal space, right sternal border
- **V₃R**: halfway between V₂R and V₄R, on a diagonal line
- **V₅R**: 5th intercostal space, right midclavicular line
- **V₆R**: right anterior axillary line, same horizontal line as V₄R and V₆R
- **V₇R**: right mid-axillary line, same horizontal line as V₅R and V₆R

Arm and leg electrodes remain unchanged from standard 12-lead ECG

Posterter ECG Electrode Placement

- **V₃₆**: left paraspinal line at the same level as V₄₆
- **V₅₆**: halfway between V₃ and V₉ / mid scapular line
- **V₇₆**: posterior axillary line at the same level as V₄₆
- **V₇₆-V₉₆**: remain unchanged from standard 12-lead ECG

Labeling the Posterior ECG

Adapted from ENA’s TIP’s Right and Posterior ECG
Department of Education & Research 10/13
## Pocket Card Resource Questionnaire

**Name (Optional):_______________________**  
**Date:________________________________**

**Unit:___________________ ______________**  
**Clinical Practice Educator:_________________**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Please answer the following according to the following scale: 1=(SD), Strongly Disagree 2= (D) Disagree, 3= (N)Neutral, 4= (A) Agree, 5= (SA) Strongly Agree</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I understand the concept of a pocket card</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>SA</td>
<td>No Answer or N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Pocket cards are used frequently to complete my assigned duties</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Pocket cards are useful to me</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The pocket cards available on my unit are relevant to my practice</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. My unit has a designated place to store pocket cards so that they are easily accessible.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Which pocket cards, if any, have you used in the past three months as a quick reference? ______________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________

Which pocket cards have you seen displayed or used on your unit? ______________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________

What pocket card resources would you like to see displayed on your unit? ______________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
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Phone: 410-368-3289

References