**Title:** Bedside Medication Verification: Using a Systematic Approach to Improve Scan Rates

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**Program or project description, including goals**
Medication verification using bedside patient and medication scanning has been shown to reduce medication errors at the point of administration. The purpose of this quality improvement project was to increase bedside patient and medication rates on a medical surgical unit. Baseline unit patient and medication scanning rates were below the organizational goals of 99% for patients and 97% for medications.

**Process(es) implemented**
The Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) methodology was applied to guide improvement in scanning rates. Staff nurses identified the root causes for scanning non-compliance through collaboration with pharmacy and review of medication scanning reports. The following barriers to patient and medication scanning were identified: medication bar codes not scanning, patient identification band not scanning, use of override to manually document medications, lack of staff education and patients in isolation or off unit for test.

**Solution identified**
An educational module was developed to address the barriers and provided to all unit nurses. The staff nurse champions provided individual feedback to nurses to address barriers. Monthly unit and individual scanning reports were posted on the unit to track improvement and provide individualized feedback. An individual award was provided to the nurse with the highest scan rates each month.

**Measurable outcomes**
Patient scanning rates increased from 98.64% to 99.63% and medication scanning rates increased from 96.44% to 98.64% over a nine month period.

**Sustainability**
The improvements in patient and medication scanning have been sustained over the nine month post-implementation period. Group and individualized education and peer to peer coaching have eliminated the common scanning barriers at the unit level.

**Role of collaboration and leadership**
The project success was directly related to the collaboration between the staff nurse champions and the pharmacy to identify and address scanning barriers. The pharmacists guided the staff nurses on the available scanning reports to assist in identifying root causes for the problem. Staff nurses were empowered by the unit management team to improve medication safety practices. The champions have had the opportunity to present their work within the organization at the quality and research/evidence-based practice councils. The sharing of processes to increase patient and medication scanning has helped other units improve patient and medication
scanning rates. The champions have also shared the project at local evidence-based practice conference with faculty, students and practicing nurses.

**Innovative attributes**
The project represents the positive impact of empowering direct care nurses to improve medication safety at the unit level. The use of monthly prizes was an innovative method for staff reward and recognition.

**Related tools and resources**
Medication scanning reports were created by pharmacy to assist nurses in improving medication safety practices. These reports allowed nurses to quickly identify important trends related to patient and medication scanning. The reports were available by nurse, medication or patient.