

Children's Mercy Kansas City

SHARE @ Children's Mercy

Research Days

Improving PACU sign-out times

Manan Karki

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarlyexchange.childrensmercy.org/researchdays>



Part of the [Anesthesiology Commons](#)

Improving PACU sign-out times

Submitting/Presenting author: Manan Karki

Primary email Address: mkarki@cmh.edu

Primary mentor: Todd Glenski, MD

Other contributors: Christian Taylor, MD; Nicole Doyle, MD

Problem statement:

The post anesthesia care unit (PACU) provides specialized care to post-surgical patients recovering from anesthesia. Patients are discharged from the PACU to other clinical units or home after they are deemed stable depending on the type of surgery. A delayed discharge from the PACU can occur due to varied reasons which can affect the dynamic patient flow, have implications on pediatric population (e.g., anxiety due to parental separation), and increase the overall cost of service.

This quality improvement project looks at possible causes to PACU sign-out delays and helps develop countermeasures to improve the efficiency of signouts once patients are ready to be discharged. When a patient is deemed ready for sign-out, the PACU nurse presses the "ready for sign-out" button in Cerner (Timestamp #1) and then the anesthesiologist puts in the sign-out note (Timestamp #2). The sign-out time is defined as the difference between Timestamp #1 and #2.

Our baseline data since December 2019 to September 2022 shows the percent of PACU "ready for signout" clicked varied between 64-86%. Percent of cases signed out under ten minutes and five minutes by the physician was 45-65% and 27-43% respectively.

We developed the initial **PDSA cycle** with following countermeasures to help decrease sign-out times:

1. Making sure the sign-out button is clicked by the PACU nurse, prior to the anesthesiologist sign-out note.
2. Encourage the same day surgery anesthesiologist carry the walkie-talkie for better communication as well as walking through PACU looking for sign-outs.
3. Start tracking the PACU sign-out metrics at the PACU & Anesthesiology huddle board.

Aim statement:

1. Increase "Cases where Ready for Sign-out was clicked by PACU nurse" by 10% and ensure its consistency by sustaining for 3 months.
2. Increase "% of Cases Signed-out under 10 minutes" from 45-65% by 10% and ensure its consistency by sustaining for 3 months.
3. Increase "% of Cases Signed-out under 5 minutes" from 27-43% by 10% and ensure its consistency by sustaining for 3 months.

