

BACKGROUND

- Patient satisfaction is influenced by many factors, including understanding new medications.
- Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) surveys are used to interpret patients' satisfaction with medication counseling during their hospital stay.
- Previous studies increased patient satisfaction and HCAHPS scores when patients were provided with handouts on side effects and encouraged to ask questions.
- However, there is limited information about the use of more comprehensive written medication education materials for the improvement of patient satisfaction.

OBJECTIVES

- Assess nurses' opinions on medication counseling and use of written handouts, as determined through a pre- and post-survey.
- Increase patient satisfaction, as assessed through HCAHPS survey results.

METHODS

Study Population:

- Nurses and patients in the telemetry unit of a single community hospital

Study Design:

- Prospective, cross sectional
- Handouts were created to promote nurses to counsel patients on new medications.
- A pre- and post-survey collected data for evaluating nurses' perceptions about medication counseling and barriers.
- The surveys were available for nurses before and after use of handouts.
- HCAHPS results for medication communication were assessed while the counseling sheets were available, and then compared with the same time frame in the previous year.
- Time Frame:
 - Pre-surveys: Nov. 1, 2020 – Nov. 30, 2020.
 - Handouts: Dec. 1, 2020 – Jan. 31, 2021.
 - Post-surveys: Feb. 1, 2021- Feb. 28, 2021

METHODS

Study Measures: Independent Variables

Disease states covered by handouts, counseling prevalence, time spent counseling, patient-centered barriers to counseling, other counseling methods used, and nurses' concerns with meeting HCAHPS scores goals

Study Measures: Dependent Variables

1. Nurses' opinions on counseling and use of medication handouts for myocardial infarction and heart failure

•Questions asked: How often do you provide education on indication/side effects prior to giving a new medication?

•All of the time, frequently, sometimes, rarely.

Considered more often if percentages of "all of the time" and frequently" added together were greater for the post-survey than the pre- survey

2. Improvement in HCAHPS medication counseling scores.

Considered greater patient satisfaction if communication about medications survey results were greater for 2020 than 2019

Data Analysis:

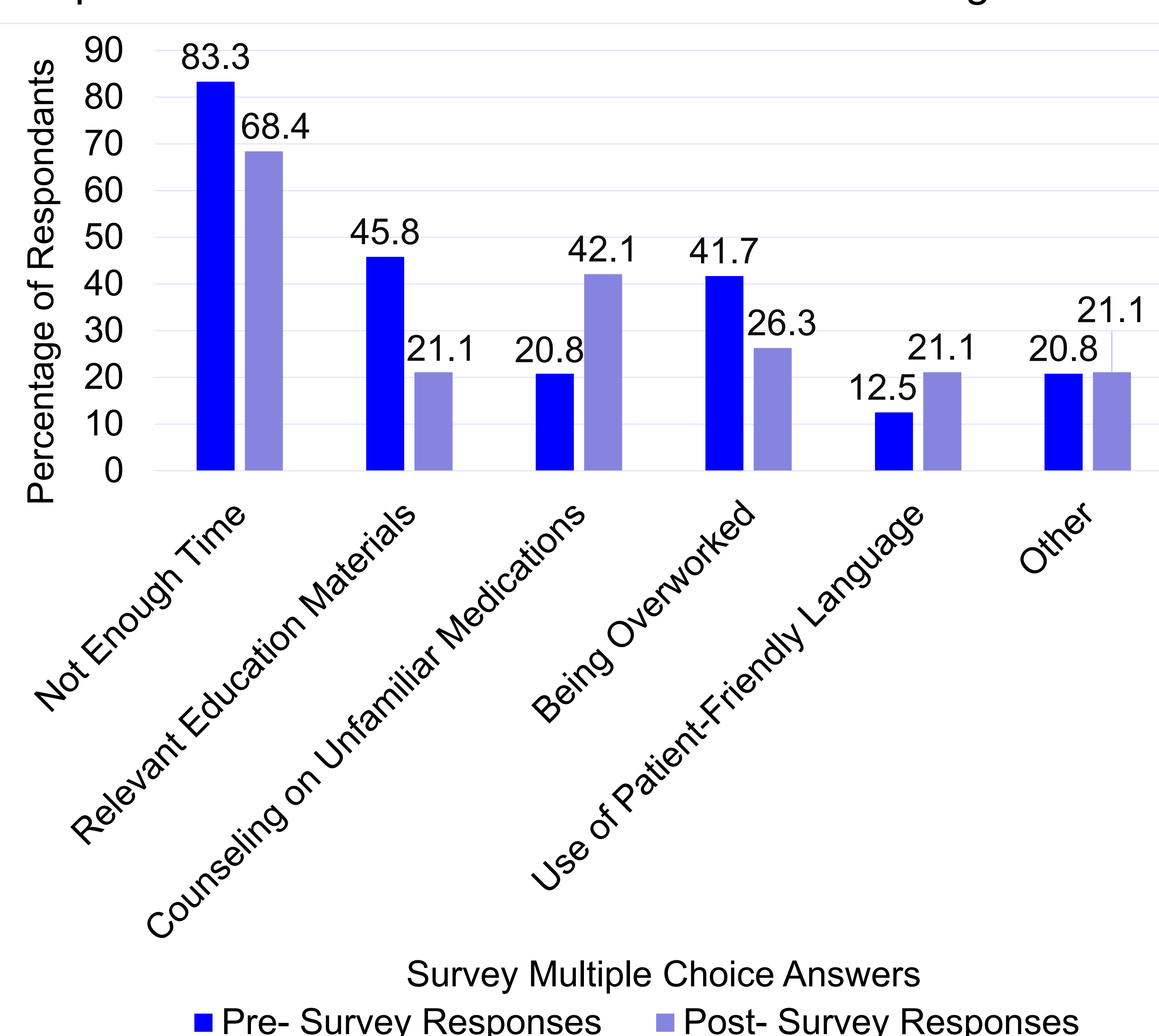
•Descriptive statistics such as mean, mode, and percentages were used to describe survey responses and HCAHPS scores.

RESULTS

Study Sample Size:

•Pre-Survey: 25 nurses; Post-Survey: 19 nurses

Graph 1: Nurses' Perceived Barriers to Counseling



RESULTS

Table 1: Nurses' Responses to Questions on Medication Counseling

	Answered "All of the Time" or "Frequently"		Answered "Sometimes" or "Rarely"	
	Pre-Survey	Post-Survey	Pre-Survey	Post-Survey
How often do you provide medication education on indication prior to giving a new medication? (No. %)	18 (72)	12 (63)	6 (24)	6 (24)
How often do you provide medication counseling on side effects prior to giving a new medication? (No. %)	18 (72)	13 (69)	5 (20)	6 (31)
When performing medication counseling, how often do you use the teach-back method to interpret patient understanding? (No. %)	8 (32)	3 (16)	17 (68)	15 (79)
When performing medication counseling, how often do you ask patients what questions they have? (No. %)	20 (80)	15 (79)	3 (12)	5 (26)
When performing medication counseling, how often do you refer the patient to a pharmacist or doctor if they have additional questions after counseling? (No. %)	16 (64)	12 (64)	7 (28)	7 (37)

Average Handout Ranking:

- Handouts ranked an average of 7.8 for effectiveness
- Average rating for helpfulness was 7.4

Reasons For Not Using Handouts

•"Forgot to use them" and "Time Constraints"

RESULTS

Table 2: Nurses' Responses to Questions on Handouts

Key: (1 being not effective at all and 10 being extremely effective)

How helpful did you find the medication counseling sheets to assist with patient counseling?						
Likert Scale	5	6	7	8	9	10
No. (%)	2 (12)	4 (24)	1 (6)	2 (12)	3 (18)	5 (29)
How effective do you feel the medication counseling sheets were for patients?						
Likert Scale	5	6	7	8	9	10
No. (%)	3 (20)	3 (20)	3 (20)	4 (27)	2 (13)	3 (20)

Table 3: Patients' Responses to HCAHPS Survey Questions

	December 2019	December 2020
Number	41	24
Communication About Medications (%)	57.2	47.1

LIMITATIONS

- COVID-19 pandemic resulting in increased nurse workload and decreased time
- Pool of nurses in the pre- versus post-survey was slightly different due to new hires and staff turnover

CONCLUSION

- Some barriers to medication counseling may be overcome with handouts including medication purpose and side effects.
- This project may have enhanced understanding of medications.
- Future studies are needed to determine if the handouts increase effectiveness of medication counseling and improve patient satisfaction.