



RHQN Newsletter, June 2009

QI Update

June has been a very busy month for the RHQN, its quality improvement initiatives, and education focus. On the 3rd and 4th of June, Bev McCullough, RHQN Quality Improvement Manager and Randy Benson, RHQN Executive Director, presented a conference for the management team at Kittitas Valley Community Hospital in Ellensburg. Included in our presentations were basic statistics, recognition of adverse events, proper completion of a root cause analysis (RCA), and an introduction to LEAN process improvement techniques.

The conference was very successful and offered managers an opportunity to complete an RCA based on a realistic scenario of a healthcare adverse event. Especially significant was the opportunity to use one of the DOH approved RCA forms to organize and conduct a proper RCA. The second great opportunity given to management staff was the application of LEAN process improvement to waste identified in the facility. The application of LEAN process to these issues was a great 'eye opener' for management staff. They were energized by the ease and simplicity of the process and actually managed to solve several issues in the limited time given to practice their LEAN technique.

Bev and Randy look forward to the opportunity of offering this full conference or the individual topics from it to your management staff or regional group. Feel free to contact Bev McCullough at (206) 216-2862 or bevm@wsha.org, or Randy Benson at (206) 577-1821 or randyb@wsha.org if you would like to discuss these topics with us.

STEMI Regional Forums

June brought the offering of two regional forums designed to bring rural and urban facilities together to develop and implement standardized policies, procedures, and protocols for transfer of STEMI heart attack patients to urban PCI centers for catheterization. Of course, the goal of these forums is to save heart muscle, and therefore lives, by getting patients from the rural emergency department door to the urban hospital cath. lab in 90 minutes or less. The first forum was held in Olympia on June 11th and the second forum will be held in Yakima on the 30th.

Each forum was attended by E.D. managers, cath lab managers, EMS personnel, administrators, and cardiologists. Washington State's rural hospitals and their urban PCI counterparts have turned a major corner in adoption of the protocols. No longer do

we hear questions about whether or not to adopt the protocols, we now hear questions about how can we make the standardized protocols work for us as ‘partners’ in saving the lives of rural heart attack victims.

If you need copies of the standardized protocols and the packet of supporting materials for implementation of the program, please contact Randy Benson at (206) 577-1821 or randyb@wsha.org.

Comprehensive Stroke Care Conference

On June 16th, the Rural Healthcare Quality Network, the Washington State Department of Health, the American Heart Association, and the Washington State EMS and Trauma Office convened a major conference on comprehensive stroke care and the establishment of a statewide primary stroke care network. Presenters discussed the science of stroke care in the rural emergency room, the use of tPA, and standardized protocols for use of tele-stroke consultations. This conference was a major step in the creation of a statewide network aimed at “saving brain tissue” like the STEMI protocols are aimed at saving heart muscle.

June Members Conference Call: Roles and Responsibilities of the Hospital Safety Officer and Safety Committee Chair

The logical follow-up to May’s conference call on preparation for an L&I survey was this month’s conference call on the roles and responsibilities of the hospital safety officer/safety committee chair. It is sometimes hard to anticipate how much interest such a presentation would generate. We were overwhelmed with the interest in this topic, the number of questions it generated, the number of requests for help we have had the opportunity to respond to, and best of all, the number of visits and other assistance we have been able to provide.

Please feel free to contact Randy Benson (206-577-1821 or randyb@wsha.org) for assistance with a “summer tune-up” for your safety committee, safety rounds in preparation for a DOH or L&I survey, or specific materials (documents, templates, samples) to help your safety committee fulfill it’s functions and provide an environment of care that is a witness to quality and best practice. Remember, all visits and consultations are a free service to member facilities covered by your dues.

Upcoming Member Conference Call

The Department of Health survey process no longer includes an in-depth survey of your facility’s compliance with the Life Safety Code. This is now handled by the State Fire Marshal’s Office. Now, more than ever, more time and effort is being put into an assessment of your compliance with the Life Safety Code. Please join us on Tuesday, July 14th, at 10:30 a.m. for **“Fire Safety in the Hospital Setting: the Life Safety Code Revisited.”**

If you have ideas, comments, questions, need additional resources, or a consultation, contact Randy Benson, RHQN Executive Director, at (206) 577-1821 or randyb@wsha.org