



As a leading healthcare facility in Virginia, Winchester Medical Center realizes that when patients are in pain, every aching moment counts. It's for this reason the hospital sought to improve the efficiency of their pain management workflow. In addition to being recognized by the Joint Commission, the new workflow yielded a 22.7% increase in the occurrence of pain assessment documentation and improved efficiency by eliminating hundreds of unnecessary nurse hours.

WINCHESTER MEDICAL CENTER ADVANCES PAIN MANAGEMENT EFFICIENCY AND DOCUMENTATION

Inefficient Pain Reassessment Methods Impede Patient Care

Winchester Medical Center identified pain management and the associated documentation as a significant opportunity for performance improvement. Assessing and managing patient pain levels are considered a primary clinical responsibility for the nursing staff while the associated documentation is crucial for compliance with Joint Commission standards.

Winchester Medical Center identified that the current workflow for pain management was a time consuming endeavor for the nursing staff. After administering pain medication, the nurse would revisit the patient within an hour to assess/manage pain, and then manually document the process in the patient's medical record. The entire process took on average nine minutes for each patient.

Although Winchester Medical Center satisfied the minimum requirements set forth by the Joint Commission, the manual workflow was time consuming for nursing and the hospital struggled to consistently assess pain medication effectiveness within an hour or assessments were completed but not documented.

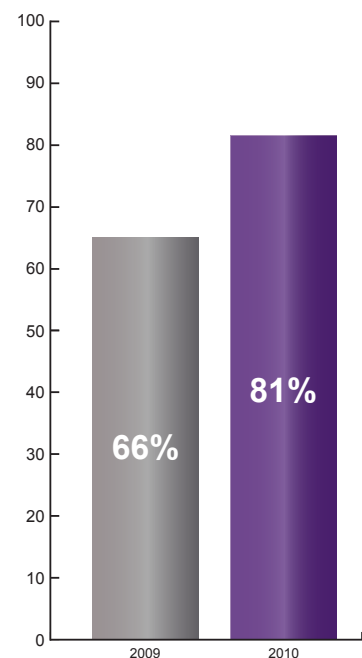
Winchester Medical Center assigned Janet Palutke, RN, MSN, Administrative Director, Nursing Support Services and Sue Clark, RN, MSN, Clinical Manager with implementing a sustainable pain management solution that would address the following goals:

- Improve efficiency of pain management workflow
- Increase the delivery and documentation of pain assessments

With these goals in mind, Winchester Medical Center implemented a new pain management workflow.



Pain Assessment Documentation



22.7% Increase

Automating Pain Reassessments and Documentation

Winchester Medical Center began implementing a new pain management workflow that would leverage their existing Interactive Patient Care system from GetWellNetwork, the bedside medication barcode scanner, and nurse pagers. These resources would be set to interface through GetWellNetwork with the patient's electronic medical record (EMR) in the McKesson® health information system.

The new pain management workflow automated several steps in the process to create a more efficient workflow that increased documentation. The process begins when the nurse administers the pain medication and scans the medication barcode at the bedside. The barcode scan then triggers the GetWellNetwork system into action. The GetWellNetwork system waits 50 minutes then delivers a message to the patient on their bedside TV. The message prompts the patient to assess their pain level using the 1-10 analog pain scale. If the patient responds, GetWellNetwork documents the response in the patient's EMR and notifies the nurse of the patient's pain level via their pager – displaying a message like, "Patient in room 0201 Rates Pain as 3". If the patient fails to respond to the message on their TV, GetWellNetwork sends a message to the nurse's pager displaying, "Patient in room 0201 had NO Response to Pain Rating" – prompting the nurse to follow-up with that patient.

The new workflow ensures that the patient's pain is assessed within an hour, as required by the Joint Commission standards, eliminates the need for nursing to manually document pain assessments and avoids unnecessary trips to the patient's room when they are not in pain.

Pain Management Automation Saves Time, Boosts Documentation

To determine the efficacy of the new pain management workflow, Winchester Medical Center measured the rate of pain assessment documentation in the patient's EMR and the estimated time savings for nursing staff. Being implemented hospital-wide in the end of 2009, Winchester Medical Center compared data from 2009 and 2010.

In 2009 Winchester Medical Center established a baseline of documenting medication effectiveness at 66%. The new, more efficient, pain management workflow was able to improve the frequency of documenting medication effectiveness to 81% in 2010. These results are nearly a one-third increase in the hospital's compliance with the Joint Commission's requirement that a patient's pain level is assessed and documented one hour after medication has been administered.

The number of patients in 2010 that responded with a pain level of three or less (acceptable pain level that does not require nurse intervention) was recorded to be 10,176. In each of these instances, nurses were automatically notified, enabling them to avoid unnecessary visits to the patient's room. Eliminating these unnecessary visits that, on average are nine minutes in duration, saved the hospital 1,526 nursing hours.

In addition to these tremendous results, the new pain management workflow has been **recognized by the Joint Commission as a "best practice for pain management."**

Facility Profile: Winchester Medical Center

- Health System: Valley Health
- Location: Winchester, Virginia
- Beds: 411
- Physician Staff: 275
- Population Served: 400,000
- Notable: 165-acre medical campus includes level II trauma center, cancer center, outpatient diagnostic center, and same-day surgery facility

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GetWellNetwork uses the bedside TV to entertain, educate and empower hospital patients and caregivers to be more actively engaged in their care. This patient-centered approach improves both satisfaction and outcomes for patients and hospitals. GetWellNetwork is the leader in interactive patient care solutions and is exclusively endorsed by the American Hospital Association.

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