Nurse Led Collaboration and Innovation: Fostering a Surge in Staff Autonomy with Enhanced Communication Resources

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Problem

- Communication in the perianesthesia area was inconsistent and unreliable, relying on word of mouth, emails, huddles and staff meetings
- This process led to staff frequently asking repetitive questions of charge nurses
- There was a need to establish a communication process that would provide up-to-date information about:
  - Patient census
  - Special patient considerations
  - Daily staffing and staff competencies
  - Equipment availability or issues
  - Other unit specific information

Setting

- 171-bed Magnet® designated community teaching hospital partner of Brigham and Women's Hospital located in Boston, MA
- Member of the Mass General Brigham integrated healthcare system
- FY21: 11,732 surgeries

Project Objective

- To improve the delivery of readily available, accurate information through the use of visual resource guides enabling perioperative staff to take ownership of unit centered issues to create a safer, efficient, and more productive work environment.

Process

- **Step 1:** Identified a need to improve communication practices
- **Step 2:** The Perianesthesia Clinical Lead Group collaborated with the Quality Improvement Manager to create new communication tools to address identified staff and unit needs through two Visual Management Boards and a Phone Tree Badge Buddy

Daily Visual Management Board

- Color coded, white board displayed in a central location
- Provides staff with 'at-a-glance' unit information
  - Daily staffing
  - Patient census & special considerations
  - Equipment and supply issues
  - Future staffing needs
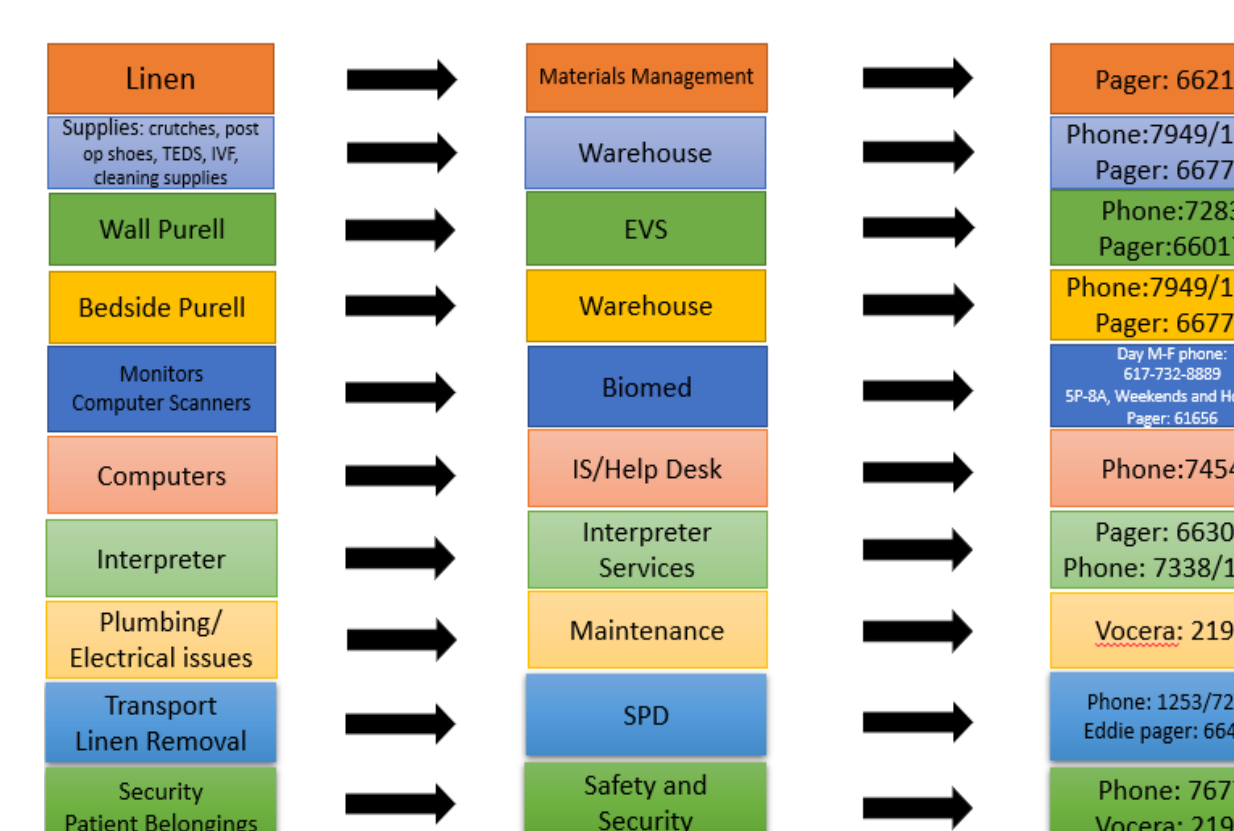- Updated daily and as needed throughout the day

Procedural Board

- Dry erase magnetic board located near the visual management board
- Lists RN staff and competency status for PACU procedures
  - Green: Competent
  - Yellow: In progress
  - Red: Requires education
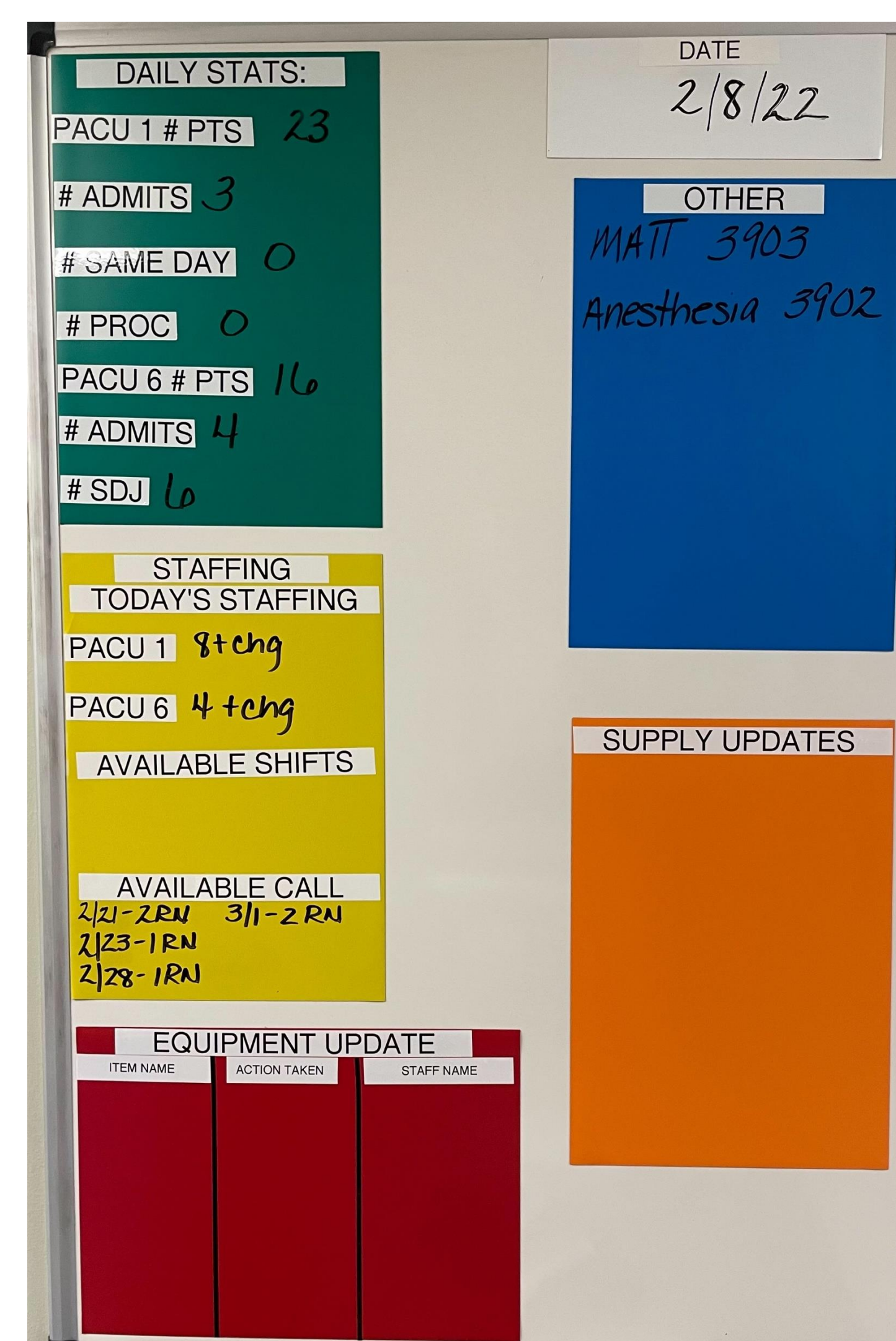
Phone Tree Badge Buddy

- Frequently called departments with phone number and pager information

Statement of Successful Practice

- Visual Management Boards provide an efficient strategy to accurately disseminate important unit information to staff
- Phone Tree Badge Buddy cards empower staff to easily find information and identify appropriate resources to independently manage issues to support quality patient outcomes
- Staff report feeling more prepared for their shift with accurate information about the unit, staffing, and the patient population
- Staff also report that they feel more prepared for the patients being cared for in the unit

Implications

- Perianesthesia nurses are in a unique position to develop cost effective, innovative communication tools that enhance non-verbal communication to create a safer, efficient, and more productive work environment.

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