

P14 - TRANSFER OF ACCOUNTABILITY AT SHIFT HANDOVER

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Brief Description of Research or Project: The Transfer of Accountability at Shift Handover policy was developed in support of the implementation of the INTERACT (Interventions to Reduce Acute Care Transfers) program and communication tools. It is projected that the policy will provide staff with the resources to enhance and support their communication and use of the INTERACT communication tools to prevent preventable transfers to acute care. The policy aims to use shift report to improve communication and client safety at shift handover. The purpose is to facilitate a standardized approach to the understanding the roles and responsibilities of staff involved in shift handover process and the use of standardized shift report templates during shift handover. The policy clearly articulates the expectations of all staff involved with the shift handover process. It proposes that personal support workers will engage in a formal role during shift handover including the use of standardized shift report templates to enhance their communication with nurses. Standardized nursing shift report templates will be utilized across the facility to ensure consistent communication of significant information is reviewed during shift handover. Report templates also provide staff with an opportunity to ensure information collected from INTERACT communication tools are transferred during shift handover for continued follow up of client issues. This process aims to increase the accountability of all staff that is involved with the client's care. **Why is this research important to profile at the Research Day 2014?** Communication is often deemed a barrier in health care and greatly affects the quality of client care that is provided. Any miscommunication or breakdown in communication within the health care team will ultimately affect clients' quality of care. Effective communication is a goal that all health care facilities strive to achieve. Shift handover is a consistent communication opportunity that occurs multiple times throughout the day for nursing staff. It is crucial that effective communication occurs during shift handover to ensure significant client issues will be transferred to ensure good continuity of care and follow up. Our policy hopes to provide staff with the tools/resources to improve the quality of communication at shift handover. The facilitation of a standardized approach to shift handover provides staff with clearly defined roles and responsibilities and communication tools/ resources. Standardized nursing shift report templates will serve to guide the communication that occurs and to ensure significant information is transferred. The standardized shift report provides nurses with the opportunity to highlight early identification of client symptoms. It is projected that the implementation will further improve communication and support the INTERACT communication tools to help reduce the organization's preventable transfers to acute care. Through the tools/resources provided in the policy, it is projected that there is an opportunity to reduce the organization's preventable transfers to acute care

through early identification of symptoms with the INTERACT program, effective transfer of information between shifts and consistent nursing follow up.