



Email Instructions to Decrease Same Day Surgery Cancellations



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Problem Area

- Same day cancellations are costly.
- Most common reason are missed preoperative instructions.
- Written medical communication is more effective than verbal communication.

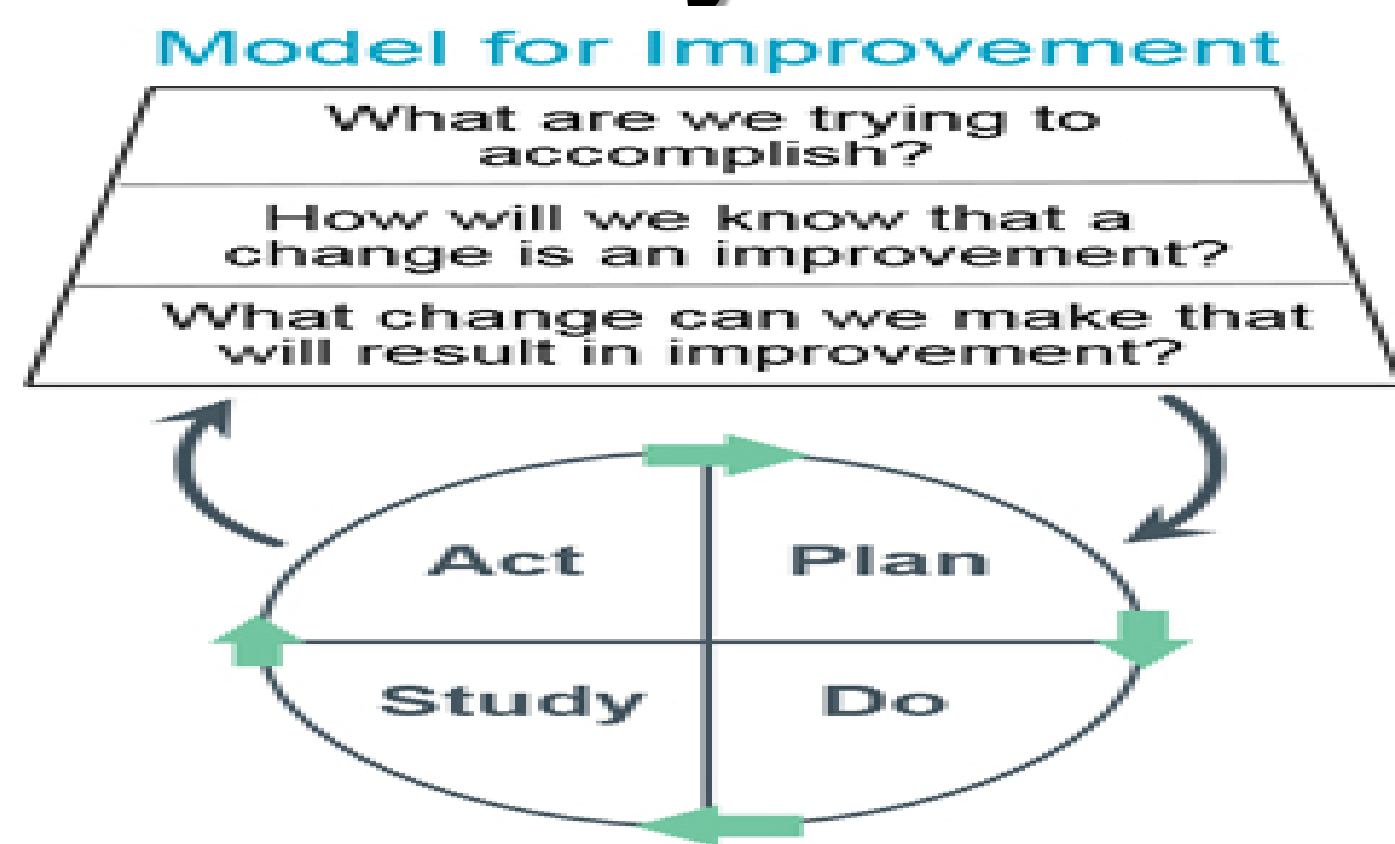
Project Purpose

How does emailed preoperative instruction and verbal preoperative instructions by nurse phone call compare to preoperative instruction by nurse phone call effect same day surgery cancellations in pediatric patients?

Objectives:

- Reasons for same day cancellations.
- Decrease cancellations due to NPO violations, no-shows, and patient illnesses.

Framework: Plan-Do-Study-Act



Methods

Design & Participants:

- Non-experimental convenience sample of parents/guardians.

Population:

- Pediatric patients scheduled for Neurosurgery, Plastics, Urology, and Dental outpatient procedures at a large pediatric facility in Texas.

Measures:

- Retrospective and prospective chart review was done over a 26 week period.
- Pre-Intervention data collected from mid June to mid September.
- Post-intervention data collected from mid October to mid January.

Procedure:

- Pre-Intervention – nurses call families with preoperative instructions.
- Post-Intervention – during the nurse phone call English speaking families offered email preoperative instructions.

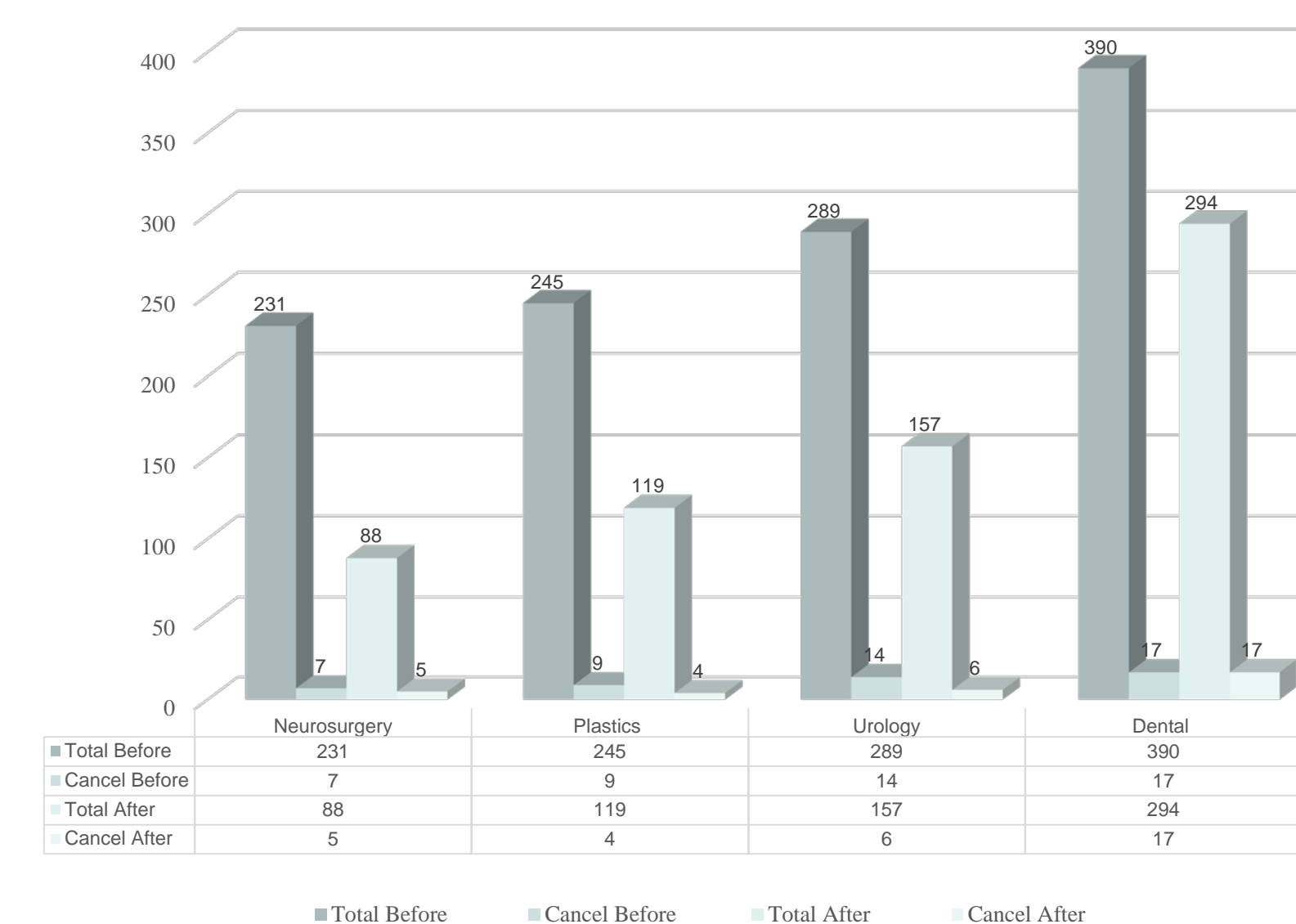
Statistical Analysis:

- Chi-square test.
- Mann-Whitney U test.

Results

- Pre-intervention – 1,155 cases with 47 (4%) cancellations.
- Post-intervention – 658 cases with 32 (5%) cancellations.
- 55% were offered email instructions.
- 30% not offered email instructions.
- 2% did not have email addresses.

Total Observations



Reasons for cancellations

Reason	Pre-Intervention (N= 47)	Post-Intervention (N = 32)
Patient illness	23% (11)	59%(19)
NPO Violation	9% (4)	22% (7)
No-Show	19% (9)	6% (2)

Practice Implications

- Extend project for a longer time.
- Translate preoperative instructions to include Spanish speaking families.
- Improve work flow – email addresses to be obtained by surgery schedulers.

Limitations

- Single center study.
- Small sample size.
- Seasonal variations.
- Not all English speaking families were included.

Conclusions

- Email is a prevalent means of communication.
- Written communication enhances medical communication.
- Email is a retrievable reference.
- Email communication has clinical significance in decreasing same day cancellations.