

Poster Session IV
Poster #22

Teamwork and Safety Climate of Perinatal Caregivers

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Background and Purpose: As a result of the Institute of Medicine's landmark findings on patient safety problems in U.S. hospitals (IOM, 1999), many organizations have implemented strategies to improve teamwork to ultimately improve patient safety. Patient safety climate which encompasses staffing, team respect, comfort with reporting errors, and other important factors such as fostering appropriate feedback and open receptive communication, is one important factor in improving the care that women receive in perinatal units. The purpose of this presentation is to describe variations in perinatal caregiver perceptions of teamwork and safety climate prior to a 6-month Crew Resource Management (CRM) training program at a large urban academic medical center and to compare responses between nurses and physicians.

Methods: Nurses (n=70) and physicians (n=88) that work a minimum of 50% of full time hours in the perinatal units at a large urban academic medical center in the north-east were invited to participate. Prior to the initiation of the CRM training program, the Teamwork and Safety Climate Survey (Sexton, et al., 2006) was administered to eligible perinatal care providers. This 27-item tool allows participants to respond to statements about their perceptions of teamwork and safety climate using a 5- point Likert scale. Demographic information was also assessed.

Results: Comparative data analysis indicate that physicians mean score for perceived teamwork climate was significantly more positive (63.1, SD=21.4) than nurses (52.38, SD = 15.02) ($t = -2.01, p = .05$) however there were no significant differences in perceptions of safety climate between the nurses and physicians.

Conclusions and Implications: Findings support the need for training to enhance perinatal caregivers' attitudes towards teamwork and safety. Training for all perinatal caregivers is currently underway. Outcomes will be measured and compared to baseline 6 months after completion of team training.