# Enhancing Psychiatric Care Through SBAR: A Quality Improvement Initiative in Inpatient Psychiatric Setting

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## INTRODUCTION

- Effective communication is vital on psychiatric inpatient.
- Inefficient, inadequate, and fragmented communication increases risks of critical incidents (Ahn et al., 2021; Pun, 2023).
- Communication breakdowns cost the healthcare system over \$1.7 billion and about 2000 preventable deaths (Adler, 2023).
- The SBAR tool is recommended for standardized communication (AHRQ, 2019).
- Staff training is essential for compliance with the tool (Vallabheneni et al., 2022).
- Ongoing tracking of usage can sustain usage over time (Polaha et al., 2019; Ruhomauly et al., 2019).
- Lack of training and tracking at practice site contribute to long handover duration, wastage of time, and noncompliance with structured handover communication.
- The purpose of the project was to enhance interprofessional communication by implementing a tracking system for SBAR usage through 24-hr administrative reports after staff training focused on improving SBAR knowledge and skills.

#### **OBJECTIVE**

This Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) quality improvement project aimed to track SBAR usage through 24-hr administrative reports, provide educational sessions to staff to enhance use of SBAR communication, and assess the impact of tracking on SBAR compliance and relationship between knowledge changes and SBAR compliance.

## **METHODS**

- Theoretical Framework: i-PARIHS
- Design: Quality Improvement (QI) guided by the Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) model
- Setting: 25-bed inpatient psychiatric unit in a metropolitan academic hospital
- Participants: 10 registered nurses
- Intervention:
  - Educational sessions introducing SBAR principles and case-based applications
  - Integration of SBAR into 24-hr shift report email template
- Data Collection
  - Retrospective chart audit of 24-hr administrative reports to assess occurrence of adverse events
  - SBAR-Learner Assessment (SBAR-LA) checklist to assess compliance with the tool
  - Knowledge and Attitudes towards SBAR (KA-SBAR) survey to assess pre- to post-intervention changes in knowledge
- Data Analysis
  - Descriptive statistics to summarize data
  - Mann-Whitney *U* test to compare acute events pre- to post- implementation of 24-hr tracking system
  - Wilcoxon signed-rank test to compare SBAR-scores pre- to postimplementation of 24hr tracking
  - Wilcoxon signed-rank test to compare KA-SBAR scores pre- to post educational sessions
  - Spearman rank correlation to assess association between knowledge/attitudes and SBAR compliance

## **RESULTS**

## SBAR Use & Acute Event Reporting

- Increase from 22 to 39 after implementing 24-hr administrative report
- Statistically significant change (p = .011)

	EVENTS
Mann-Whitney U	44.500
Wilcoxon W	149.500
Z	-2.538
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.011

## SBAR-LA compliance (median scores)

Pre-intervention: 2.6Post-intervention: 8.5

• Statistically significant change (p = .001)

Z	Post-SBAR-LA - Pre-SBAR-LA
	3.306
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.001

# KA-SBAR Knowledge/Attitude scores (higher scores = poor knowledge/attitudes)

Pre-test mean = 51.2

Post-test mean: 21.4

• Statistically significant change (p = .005)

7	Post-KA-SBAR - Pre-KA-SBAF
Δ Λ (O ( 'I I)	-2.805 <sup>a</sup>
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.005

## Correlation (knowledge and compliance)

- Strong negative correlation between KA-SBAR and SBAR-LA
- Spearman's rho = -.791, p < .001)

		Correlations		
			KA-SBAR	SBAR-LA
Spearman's rho  SBAR-LA	KA-SBAR	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	791**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000	
	N	20	20	
	SBAR-LA	Correlation Coefficient	791**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
		N	20	20
Note. **. Corre	elation is signi	ficant at the 0.01		

### CONCLUSION

- Tracking SBAR use via 24-hr administrative reports improved reporting of acute events
- Tracking also improved compliance with structured communication using the SBAR tool
- Educational sessions were associated with improved knowledge and attitudes towards SBAR
- Increase in knowledge led to improved compliance with the SBAR tool
- Ongoing education is essential for the sustainability of SBAR compliance
- Integrating tracking into routine clinical workflows is critical for continuous improvements in documentation, communication, and information-sharing

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