Enhancing Patient Safety by implementing A paired of Special labels for Therapeutic Packing / Removal Items in OT

Fung SHJ(1), Li WC(1)
Operating Theatre, Cardio-thoracic Surgical Department

Keywords:
Enhancing Patient Safety
A special label

Introduction
Cardiac-thoracic Surgical Department of Queen Mary Hospital is Hong Kong’s premier cardiac surgical center. Nearly 1000 cardiac surgical procedures are performed annually. A large proportion belongs to the very high risk category. In some cases, may need therapeutic packing after a long period of Cardio-pulmonary bypass. ECMO support after operation is common, therefore like artery, mosquito, and rubber snare will also be remained inside surgical wound for securing the ECMO cannula. Reliable and consistence nursing record is important for documenting of these situations. Also, therapeutic packing may increase the risk of an incorrect count at subsequent operations. In order to avoid any confusion in counting, a paired tailor-made label is introduced.

Objectives
☐ To enhance patient safety by avoiding Retain Surgical Items (RSI) after surgery ☐ To maintain the safety standard of therapeutic Packing or removal Items ☐ To ensure good documentation for packing or removal of therapeutic items

Methodology
A paired tailored made of “Packed Inside” & “Remove From” is introduced for documenting therapeutic packing / removal items. Code number is assigned for each pair labels. One is for “Packed Inside” items and the other is for “Removed From” items. Logistics is set up whenever intentionally items are packed or removed. When patient with surgical wound is not closed & items intentionally packed inside after operation, the OR nurse will fill out the label and stick “Packed Inside label on patient’s progress sheet & document the label Code no. on special form for OT record. Besides, the OR nurse also needs to document on the count sheet as well as the “Surgical Safety Checklist” for subsequent operation’s reference. When the patient returns to OT for removal items, the OR nurse will refer to the progress sheet and the previous
Label’s Code number for matching the numbers removed are same as documented previously.

**Result**
We started to use these special labels from 31/08/2014. Till 31/12/2014, there were totally 28 cases using these labels. Average seven cases per month will use these labels. Therefore a more concise documentation is needed to ensure the Therapeutic Packing / Removal Items are clearly stated on patient’s record. The “Packed Inside” & “Remove From” special labels are well adopted. Staff and surgeons are welcome to these changes in order to ensure patient safety and clear documentation of therapeutic Packing / Removal items.