

Improving Care Continuity and Communication Using Adaptive Developmentally Delayed Pediatric Care Planning

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Problem Statement

Developmentally handicapped patients are:

- Representative of a smaller, but important group who sustain high hospitalization rates
- More likely to experience increased complications leading to additional hospitalization time
- Patients should already be provided individualized, specialized care protocols upon hospital admission
- Frequency of advanced care planning conversations between patients and healthcare professionals remains low in clinical practice nationwide
- Current advanced care planning among the developmentally delayed on an urban pediatric medical surgical unit:
 - Inconsistent
 - Internal review revealing parental dissatisfaction and nonspecialized care
 - Lacks a standardized admission protocol process

Project Purpose & Goals

Purpose Statement: To improve care continuity and communication using a standardized Adaptive Care Plan (ACP) that collects the specific information required to create individualized and unique care plans for each developmentally delayed pediatric patient

Process Goal

- 100% of hospitalized developmentally delayed children will have an ACP documented upon admission in a nursing note using the “.DDAdapt” dot phrase

Outcome Goal

- 100% of hospitalized developmentally delayed children will receive care concordant with their recorded ACP

Methods

Setting

- An inpatient pediatric medical surgical unit within a large urban academic medical center
- Staffed by 73 staff nurses, 4 child life specialists, and 1 patient care liaison

Population

- Hospitalized children with a diagnosis of developmentally delay

Intervention

- Staff nurses used the smart phrase “.DDAdapt” to populate the ACP template into a nursing note within the patient’s electronic health record
- Staff nurses completed the ACP with the patient’s caregiver upon admission
- Shift reassessments documented by staff nurses using the smart phrase “.ACPreassess” to ensure the specialized plan of care was maintained throughout the entire hospital stay

Implementation Strategies

- Creation of electronic smart phrases to promote ease-of-use, staff compliance, and consistency among the nursing staff
- Recruitment of change champion team members
- Project lead/change champion individually facilitated staff teach back training
- Quick-reference reminder cards strategically placed within the three nurses stations and all patient care rooms on the pediatric unit
- Attendance of monthly staff meetings with project reminders and updates
- Frequent email communications with site representative and staff to provide updates and address concerns
- Project lead presence on the unit three days per week
- Weekly data collection via chart audits

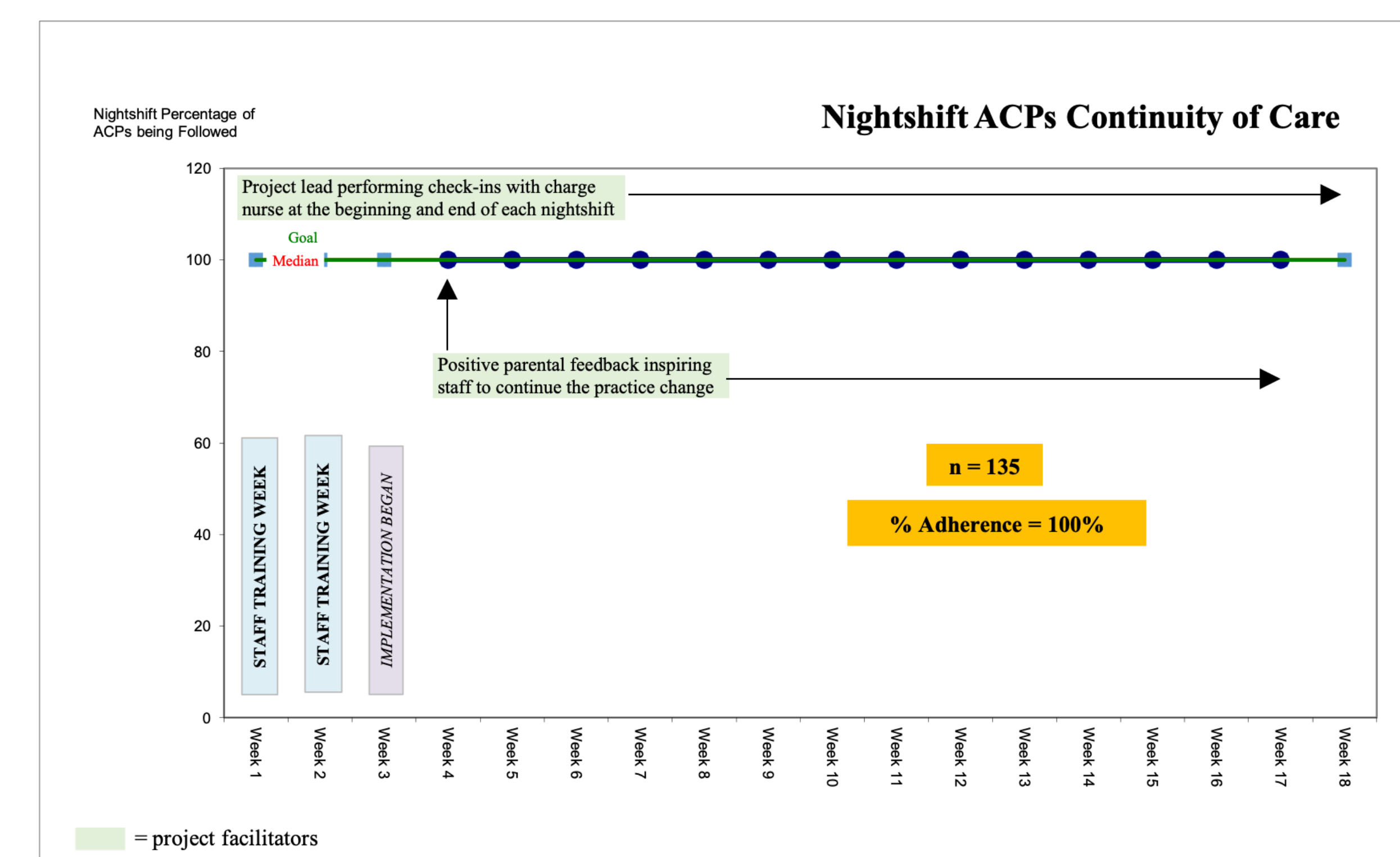
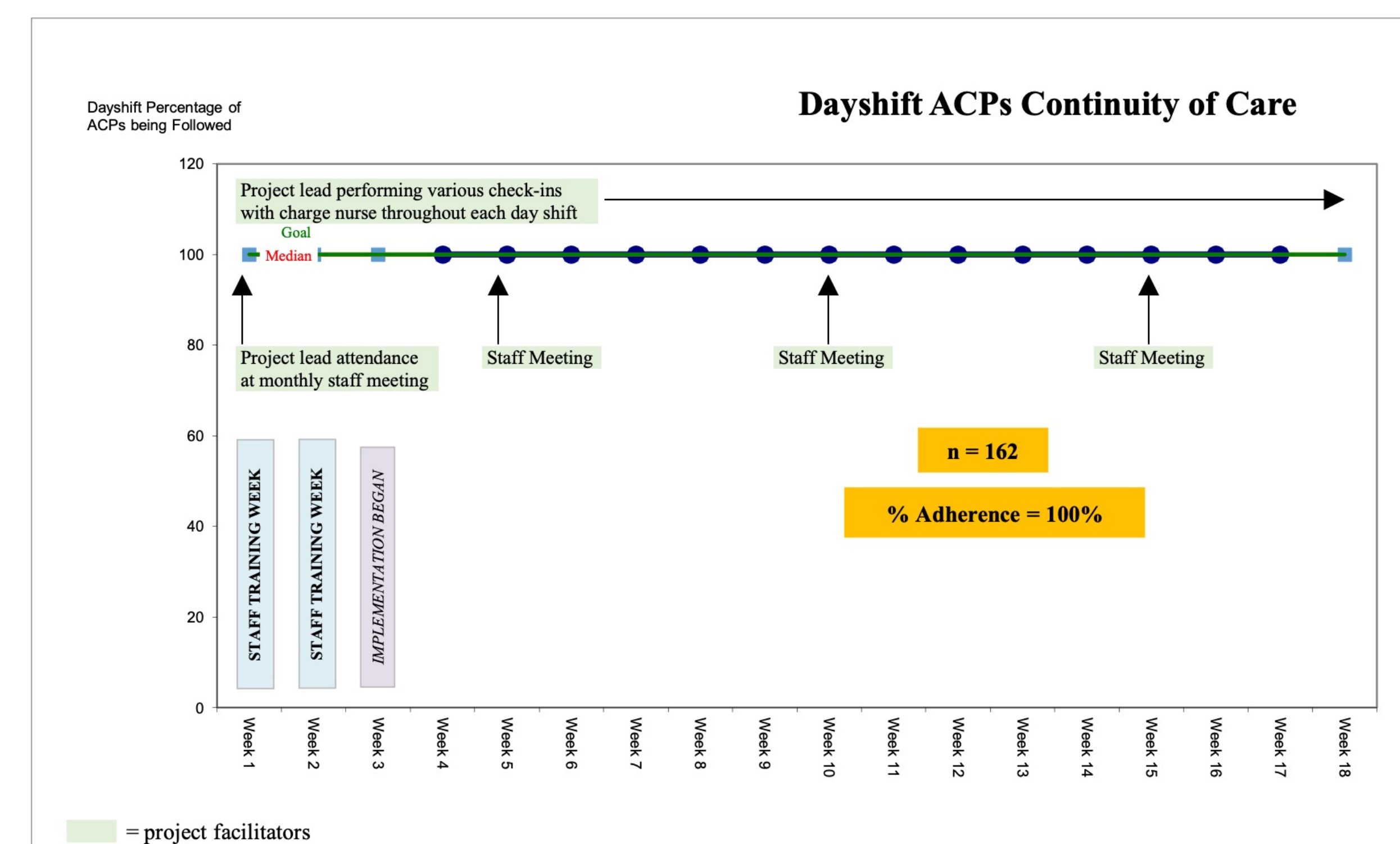
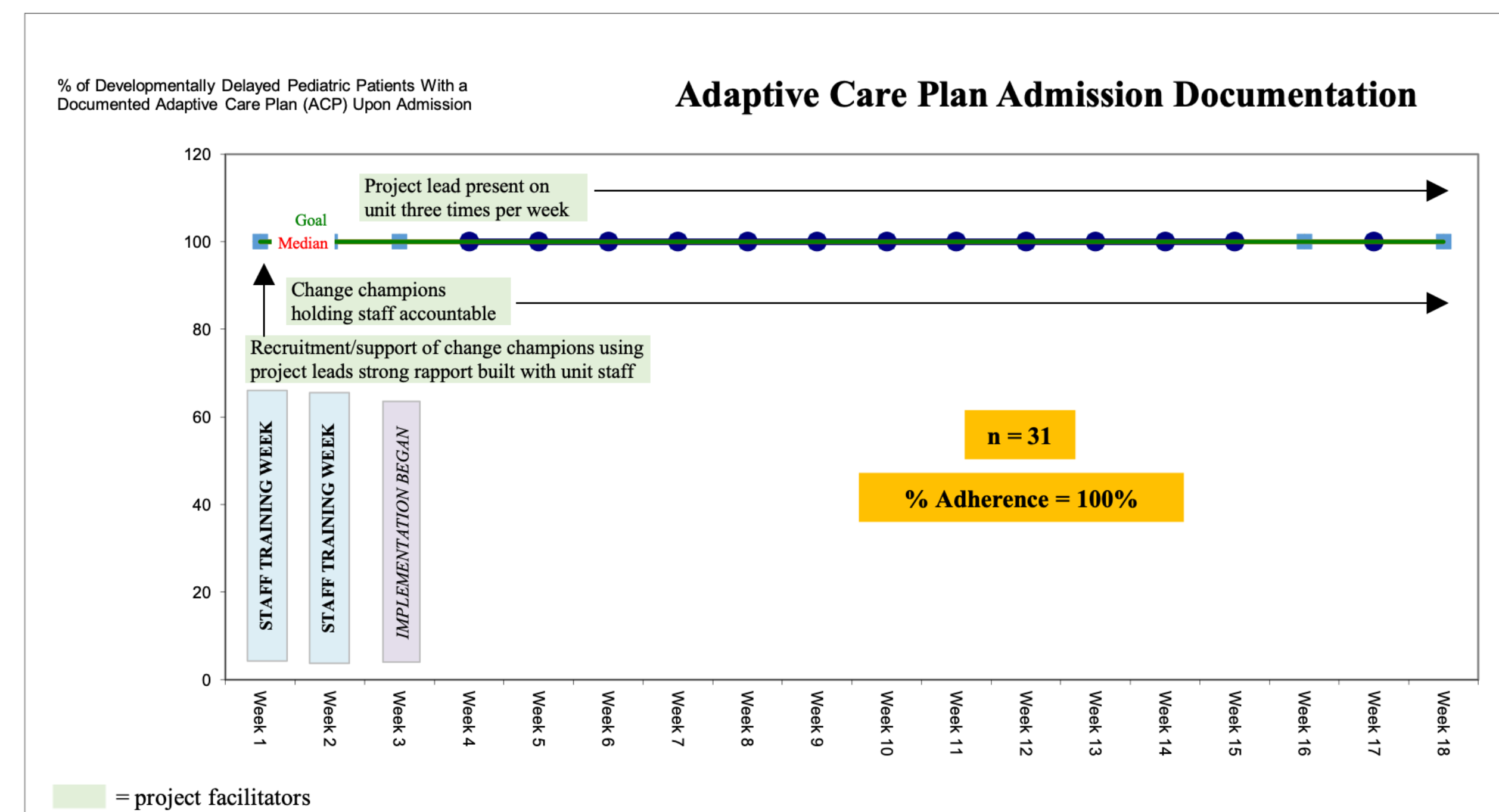
ACP Template:



Process Maps:



Results



Process Measure

- 100% of hospitalized developmentally delayed children had an ACP documented upon admission in a nursing note using the “.DDAdapt” dot phrase

Outcome Measure

- 100% of hospitalized developmentally delayed children received care concordant with their recorded ACP

Discussion

Key Findings and Interpretation

Implementation of the ACP improved care continuity and communication among the developmentally delayed pediatric population

Consistent with literature findings which show that the use of ACPs:

- Helps to diminish challenges and anxiety during stressful medical encounters
- Enhances overall experiences of patients with autism spectrum disorder
- Enhances quality and safety of care administered
- Assists in staff feeling more comfortable and confident with the treatment provided towards developmentally delayed patients

Rate of individualized, advance care planning on admission between health care professionals and pediatric patient caregivers was consistently increased throughout the entirety of the implementation period

- Compliance increased with creating specialized care plans for the developmentally delayed patients upon admission
- Continuity of care improved throughout hospital stay
- Promoted communication and collaboration among the nursing staff and patient caregivers
- Resulted in positive caregiver feedback and support of the practice change
- Smart phrases provided ease-of-use and promoted staff compliance

Limitations

- Inability to build tool directly within the electronic health record
- Staff nurse burnout has taken a toll within healthcare nationwide, leading to poorly motivated bedside nurses towards quality improvement practice changes
- Limited time frame of implementation (18 weeks)
- Small study sample size (n=31)

Conclusions

Implementation of the ACP was effective and useful in improving specialized care planning on admission and promoted continuity of care throughout the hospital stay among the developmentally delayed pediatric population

Sustainability

- Integration of ACP within Electronic Health Record (EHR) flowsheets
- Development of a Best Practice Alert (BPA) within EHR for nursing admission reminder
- Addition of ACP education within the unit’s annual nurse competency training

Next Steps

- Continue communications with EHR specialists
- Designate change champion leaders to maintain accountability and educate new staff nurses/child life specialists on the use of the ACP templates
- Another NP student to build upon results and lead charge towards EHR integration

References/Acknowledgements

Access to full reference list:



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UMSON Pediatric Primary Care DNP Class of 2023

All nurses, change champions, and staff on the pediatric inpatient floor