Reducing Contact Gown Waste - A Quality Improvement Initiative A3

Joel Polisney1, Sarah Smith1, Abhishek Manjunathan1, Jawad Al-Khafaji MD1,2

No disclosures. 1: University of Michigan Medical School. 2: Department Veterans Affairs (The views expressed in this article are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Department of Veteran Affairs or the United States Government.)

BACKGROUND

- Healthcare is expensive: Healthcare cost the US $3.5 Trillion according to the CDC.
- Health care is wasteful: hospitals average 33.8 pounds of waste per day, per staffed bed.
- Caring for low acuity patient using contact isolation standards could generate 5 kg of solid medical waste in one day.
- At UCSF, these gowns cost 2.6 million dollars in one day.
- No clear guidelines for medical trainee gown usage before intervention.
- No safety benefit for additional trainees to enter to rooms from an educational perspective.
- There is no standard for when it is “gowning up” is unnecessary for medical trainees to enter patient’s rooms.
- At the Ann Arbor VA Health System there are 4 general medicine teams that are made up of an attending physician, 3 resident physicians and 4 medical students.
- Teams round outside of each room. During rounds they discuss the patient and the plan.
- Following rounds they enter rooms to evaluate and share the information discussed with the patient.
- If the patient is on contact precautions, frequently the attending and residents gown up and enter the room first, and medical students follow suit.
- “Gowning up” by trainees is necessary when there is educational value as determined by the attending and senior residents.
- There is no standard for when it is “gowning up” is unnecessary for medical trainees to enter patient’s rooms while they are on contact precautions.
- Medical Students report that they waste gowns when they enter patient’s rooms unnecessarily.
- Specifically, on wing 5W, yellow gown usage was:
  - 430 Gowns in...