

Reducing Cancellations in Outpatient Spinal Cord Stimulator (SCS) Trials through Patient Education

PROBLEM: Over 3 months, 100% of SCS trial procedures (n=5) had been cancelled due to a lack of patient knowledge regarding pre and post SCS trial process. Cancellations resulted in decreased patient satisfaction and loss of revenue.

AIM: Reduce the number of outpatient cancellations for patients scheduled for a SCS trial through patient education.

INTERVENTION:

Nurses developed a patient self-report questionnaire to evaluate knowledge level regarding SCS trial process. Patients were scheduled for a pre-procedure appointment. During this appointment:

- Patient completes the questionnaire to establish baseline knowledge about the SCS trial
- Nurse educates patient, including review of pre-procedure instructions, frequently asked questions, how to complete a pain diary, how to access device educational video website
- Vendor and physician meet with patient to support any further education.

On the day of trial, patient completes the self-report questionnaire prior to the SCS trial to evaluate knowledge level

TEAM:

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RESULTS: Results demonstrate that patient education prior to the SCS trial was successful in improving knowledge regarding the SCS trial process resulting in zero procedural cancellations.

IMPACT

- Zero SCS Trial patient cancellations March 2017-July 2020 (n=75)

IMPLICATIONS FOR NURSING PRACTICE

- Standardized pre-procedure education is effective in increasing patient knowledge thereby decreasing procedural cancellations.
- Nurses in all ambulatory practice settings have a responsibility to ensure that patients receive appropriate, evidence-based, pre-procedure education.
- Pre-procedure education for patients undergoing SCS trial is now an established practice and component of the SCS Trial Protocol

