مستشفى الملك فيصل التخصصي ومركز الأبحاث
King Faisal Specialist Hospital & Research Centre

QUALITY & SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING #22

Monday, 20 February 2023

(3:30 - 5:30 pm)

Patient Safety Story

Patient Safety Story - Retained Surgical Object

Latfia is a 54-year-old female diagnosed with Squamous Cell Carcinoma who had a previous left partial glossectomy and neck dissection. She had a repeat partial glossectomy, with left neck node excision, right modified neck dissection, free flap, and skin grafting. The patient was discharged home with a tracheostomy after 14 days of hospitalization.

One week after discharge, while the family was suctioning the tracheotomy tube, Latfia vomited a 4x4 gauze that was left in the patient’s throat. The family contacted the tracheostomy specialist, who advised them to go to the emergency. Latfia had no further problems afterwards.

Patient Safety Story

Patient Safety Story - Cont.

Findings:

- It was normal agreed practice that responsibility for the throat packs is assigned to the anesthesiology department however in this case the throat pack was placed by ENT,
- The nurse had a concern about the throat pack number and count but the physician did not respond and the nurse did not escalate. (On further deep dive, there was a feeling of absence of a collaborative culture, as well the presence of a power gradient in the peri-operative areas"),
- Lack of compliance with the established counting policy and Procedures including announcement of the removal of throat pack, white board count, paper count, etc..
- The appropriate throat pack (with pull cord) has not been available for one year. Therefore staff have been using alternatives solutions such as using non radio-opaque gauze without a cord.

Lessons Learned:

- Emphasize the collaborative culture and communication in the Multidisciplinary Teams,
- Ensure utilizing the universal skill STAR (Stop, Think, Act, & Review) and Stop the line,
- Ensure compliance with the established policy.