
ICU Volume 14 - Issue 1 - Spring 2014 - Cover Story: ICU Organisation & Design

Appendix 2a. ICU Observations. People.

Your Role:

Your role is to be a neutral observer, with fresh eyes, of what you see during your ICU visit. We would like you to pay particular attention to the PEOPLE (patients, staff and family visitors): how they work, how they flow, how they affect the care and safety of patients. You may interview a staff member and/or patients or family members. Keep your questions pretty open-ended (e.g., not Yes/No questions) and continually ask "Why?" to get to the root causes of what you hear. Please write your observations in this pad.

Please look around you and observe what is happening: These are your personal observations based on your visit as well as your questioning of staff, patients and family. Think about, and jot down observations on:

What surprises you about the ICU? Why?

What do you see as some of the issues that staff, patients, and families face in the ICU?

What are some work-arounds that you have seen (e.g., improvised ways to work around problems)?

What are some of the ways you think we could fix the problems you have seen? Why?

How would you feel if you were a staff member in the ICU? Why?

How do you think patients and families feel? Why?

Here are some questions that may help you dig deeper: Feel free to improvise and create your own questions.

How would you describe what it is like to be a (patient/family member, staff member) in the ICU? Why?

What surprises you about working in or being a patient/family member in the ICU? Why?

What are the best experiences you've had working here/ being a patient here/ being a family member here?

What are some things that concern you about working in or being a patient/family member here?

If you could fix the biggest problem in the ICU, what is it, and what would you do?

Is there any way you can think of to improve the experience that you have here as an employee/as a patient/as a family member? What would it be?

Do you see any risks to patient safety in this ICU that you would want to fix? What are they? How would you fix them?

How do you think families of patients feel about visiting the ICU? What could be done to improve that? Why?

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