

You Matter Most! Why Wait?

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BACKGROUND & INTRODUCTION

Healthcare is moving toward patient-centered care models that prioritize healthcare outcomes, a factor crucial to patients. Supporting the factors that matter to patients can lead to healthcare delivery patient satisfaction. Supporting patients' well-being, improving the patient experience, and promoting patient satisfaction is a challenge for the Peri-Operative Pre-Admit (PAT) Department.

The PAT department is composed of nurses, advanced nurse practitioners, office coordinators, phlebotomists, and patient care assistants who see patients scheduled for surgery. There are several points of service and opportunities for the promotion of patient satisfaction. The points of service are the peri-assessment, patient interview, medication list review, perioperative education, laboratory testing, and diagnostic testing. Perioperative education also includes the family with surgical expectations. The PAT visit is patient-centered and can take longer than anticipated.

PURPOSE & OBJECTIVES

This project aimed to determine the factors that mattered most to the patient during the perioperative PAT visit. The goal was to identify opportunities to increase patient satisfaction, affect care quality, and decrease wait times.

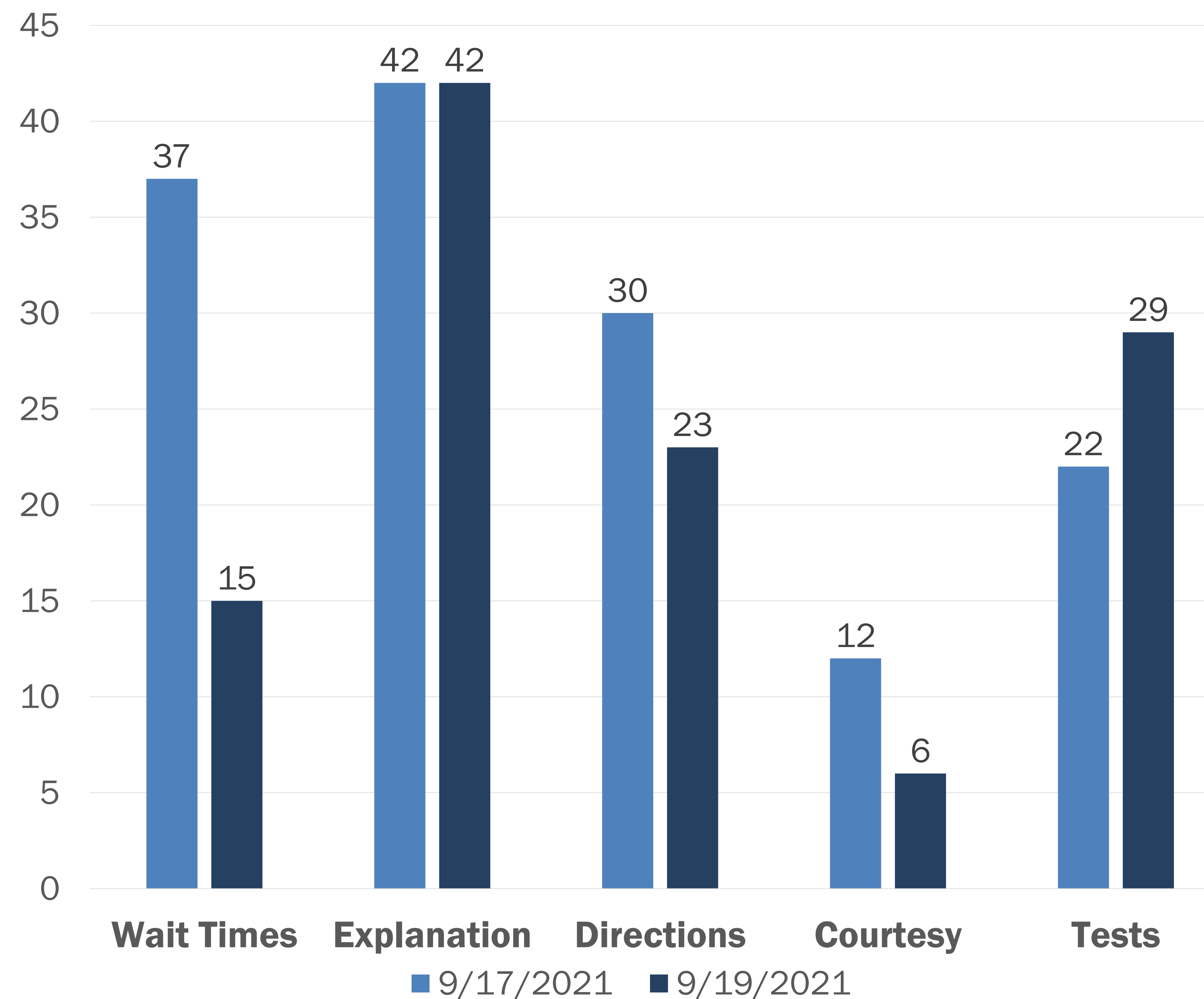
The PAT team collaborated through brainstorming about how to meet this goal. They developed a survey to identify factors that mattered most to patients. Instead of creating a survey from scratch, they used the "What Matters Most Survey." The data from the survey would provide valuable insight to positively affect patient satisfaction and quality of care.

METHOD

A simple pen and paper self-administered "What Matters Most" questionnaire was provided to patients in the PAT waiting room at the time of check-in. The survey asked patients to rank five categories from 1 to 5, one (1) as the most important and five (5) as the least important. The five categories were PAT waiting time, explanation of perioperative anesthesia process, staff courtesy, understanding of directions to the surgical procedure area, and understanding of the tests. The questionnaire was handed out on two days (September 17th and September 19th, 2021). A PAT nurse collected the completed patient-labeled survey. The responses were reviewed and tallied (Figure 1). Forty-two questionnaires were completed each day.

RESULTS

What Matters Most Survey Results



SURVEY QUESTIONS

What Matters Most Questionnaire

Please rank in numerical order from 1 – 5 during your Pre-Admission Testing (PAT) Appointment
1 most important and 5 least important

- Wait times
- Explanation regarding Pre-Anesthesia Testing Process
- Staff Courtesy
- Test Results & Understanding of Test
- Directions (check all that apply)
 - Pre-Admit Testing
 - Surgical Procedure
 - Other Procedure

RESULTS/IMPLICATIONS

The questionnaire showed that most patients agreed that wait times and explanation of the PAT process were most important. The perioperative PAT team reached out to digital communication to improve the waiting room experience. A proposal to consider using technology to allow the patients to complete other tasks while waiting for the perioperative visit to begin is being reviewed. Each patient is unique and waiting times can vary.

Optimal patient care is critical to achieving the goals of the PAT department. The goals are to screen the patient for the surgical procedure, communicate expectations of the specific surgery, provide patient and family education regarding medications and products to reduce infection, explain the pre-anesthesia testing process while delivering quality patient-centered care. A concurrent goal, along with the ones listed above, is to avoid surgery cancellation or delay.

FUTURE ACTION

The Pre-Admit Process and wait times are the most critical factors for PAT patients. The wait time is often necessary to complete a thorough assessment and provide a comprehensive explanation of the surgical process that contributes to safe surgical outcomes. For the patients who ask the question: Why wait? The answer is YOU: You, the patient, matters most. The literature review identifies that patient's wait time correlates with patient satisfaction. Alternative activities and tasks that can be completed while waiting are future actions to be implemented and the outcomes reviewed.

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