



Is Your Hospital Hiding These Common Latent Safety Threats?

Latent safety threats, or “accidents waiting to happen,” have a major impact on patient safety. Below are some common latent safety threats that simulation has helped hospitals uncover – along with mitigating actions that they took to fix them.

Use this list to explore whether any of these latent safety threats may exist in your hospital. Then, use the mitigating actions as *inspiration and a starting point* to help you create solutions for your *own* hospital. You may want to consider running simulations to help you effectively determine and test the solutions that work best for your hospital’s space, protocols, and unique needs. This can give you peace of mind that you’ve successfully mitigated these threats.



Common Latent Safety Threat



Mitigating Action(s) Taken

MEDICATION SAFETY

Medications or concentrations missing in the ED¹

Created a standardized ED medication list to ensure all medications are readily available²

Relying on memory of contraindications, route of administration, and dose³

Added labels to medications that include dose, route, allowable frequency, and contraindications⁴

EQUIPMENT

Equipment missing or incorrect⁵

Reviewed stocking process and added a “double check” or audit⁶

Relying on memory of what related equipment might be needed when using a specific device⁷

Created a checklist of additional equipment needed for each device⁸

Missing or dead batteries in key items, such as laryngoscope, clock, and cordless in-room phone system⁹

Established a system for periodic checking of all equipment to ensure proper functioning¹⁰

TEAMWORK AND COMMUNICATION

Lack of closed-loop communication^{11,12}

Practiced closed-loop communication in simulations and reviewed video recordings during debriefing¹³

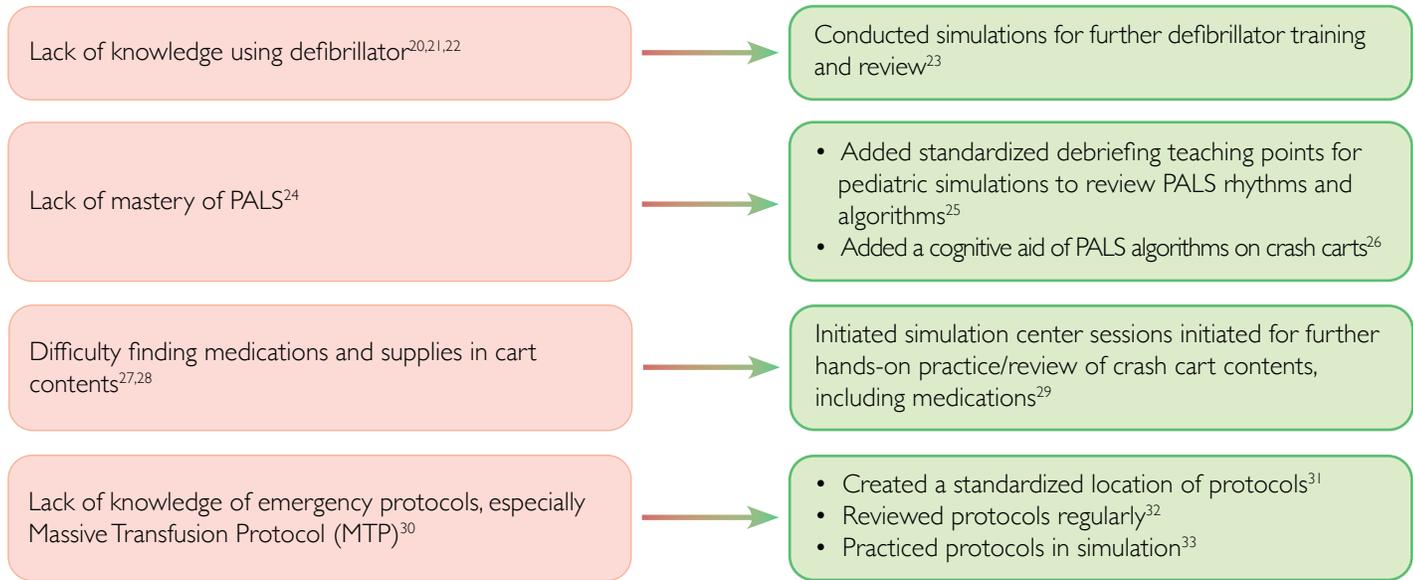
Lack of role clarity^{14,15}

Created a diagram of team members’ physical locations by role around the bedside and/or labeled floor tiles by role^{16,17}

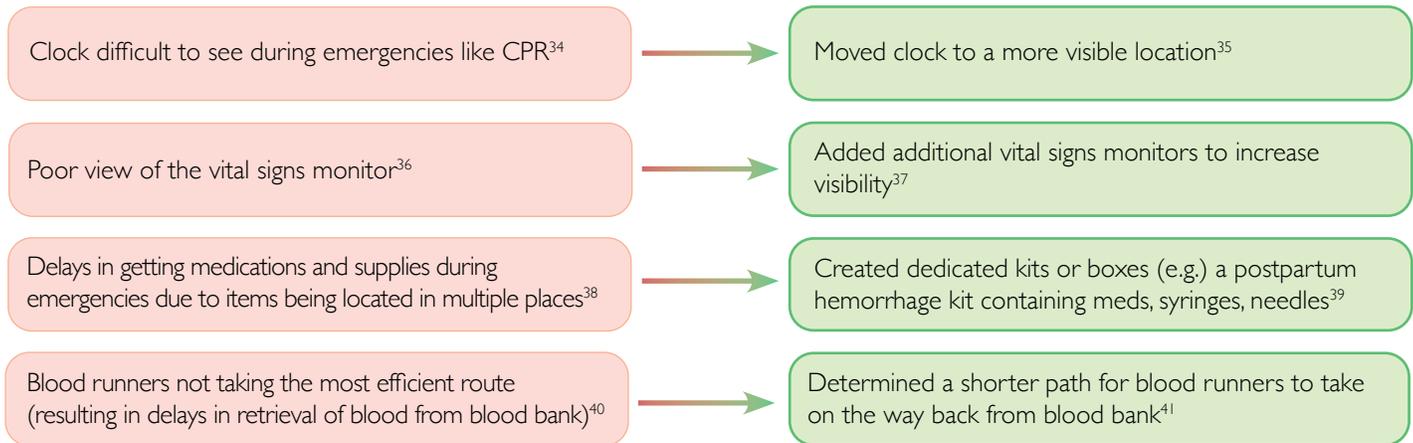
Shared mental model not established¹⁸

Performed simulations to practice team behaviors such as coordinating without the need for explicit communication and predicting each others’ needs¹⁹

KNOWLEDGE GAPS



ENVIRONMENT/SPACE



We can help you leverage simulation to identify and mitigate countless latent safety threats to boost your Quality Improvement efforts and ensure patient safety.

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