



“PAUSE, CHECK, PROTECT: EXPLORING COMPLIANCE AND CULTURE AROUND ‘STOP BEFORE YOU BLOCK’ AT SOUTHEND UNIVERSITY

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INTRODUCTION:

❑ Wrong-site nerve blocks remain a preventable yet consequential complication in regional anaesthesia. The SBYB protocol is a nationally recognised safeguard to verify the correct patient, procedure, and side before needle insertion. However, adherence and perceptions may vary due to time pressures, human error, or lack of awareness. Auditing compliance and staff attitudes can identify practice gaps, improve understanding, and strengthen a safety-focused culture to ensure consistent application of protocols.

Materials and Methods:

Audit design: prospective audit using an anonymous staff questionnaire assessed compliance with, behaviours and attitudes towards the SBYB

Data Collection: Questionnaires were distributed to all anaesthetists performing laterality

Response process: Anonymous and voluntary, self reporting format

Analysis: Quantitative analysis measured full compliance rates

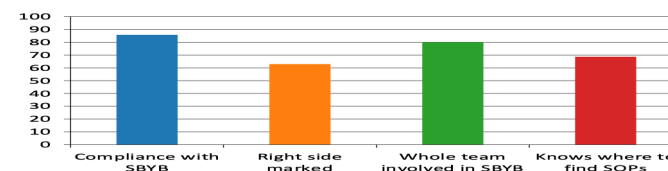
RESULTS:

- ❑ The questionnaire explored ten domains relating to behaviour, knowledge, and attitudes toward the Stop Before You Block (SBYB) SOP.
- ❑ Overall, 97.1% of respondents knew the need to perform SBYB before unilateral block. Of these, 85.5% reported routinely performing SBYB, while 68.8% knew where to locate the official SOP, and correct site marking was achieved in 62.9%.

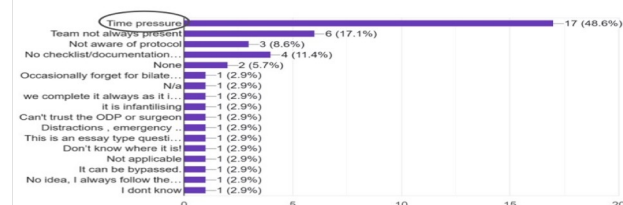
RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Mandate visible posters with barcode access to the standard operating procedure (SOP) in every induction area
- Clear site-marking responsibility
- Reinforce theatre-wide awareness through regular updates
- Strengthen multidisciplinary accountability
- Periodic reinforcement through simulation and team briefings

SBYB Compliance and Awareness Metrics



What are the most common reasons the SOP is not being followed?



DISCUSSION:

- ❑ This audit reinforces the critical role of the Stop Before You Block (SBYB) SOP in preventing wrong-side peripheral nerve blocks. These findings highlight important gaps in awareness and practice. Enhancing SOP visibility, strengthening education, and undertaking a planned reaudit are essential steps to improving compliance and advancing patient safety.

REFERENCE:

- Haslam, N., Bedforth, N. and Pandit, J.J., 2022. Prep, stop, block': refreshing 'stop before you block' with new national guidance. *Anaesthesia*, 77 (4), pp.372-5.