Improved management of medication syringes for parturient with labor epidural

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Background

Medication syringes were previously locked in epidural carts. They were used for taking care of breakthrough pain and hemodynamic changes. Patient stickers are attached to all the syringes but they look alike.

There were potential risk/issue of…

- Use for wrong patients
- Cart with medications may be in use for different patient
- Inappropriate opioid management

Updated Management

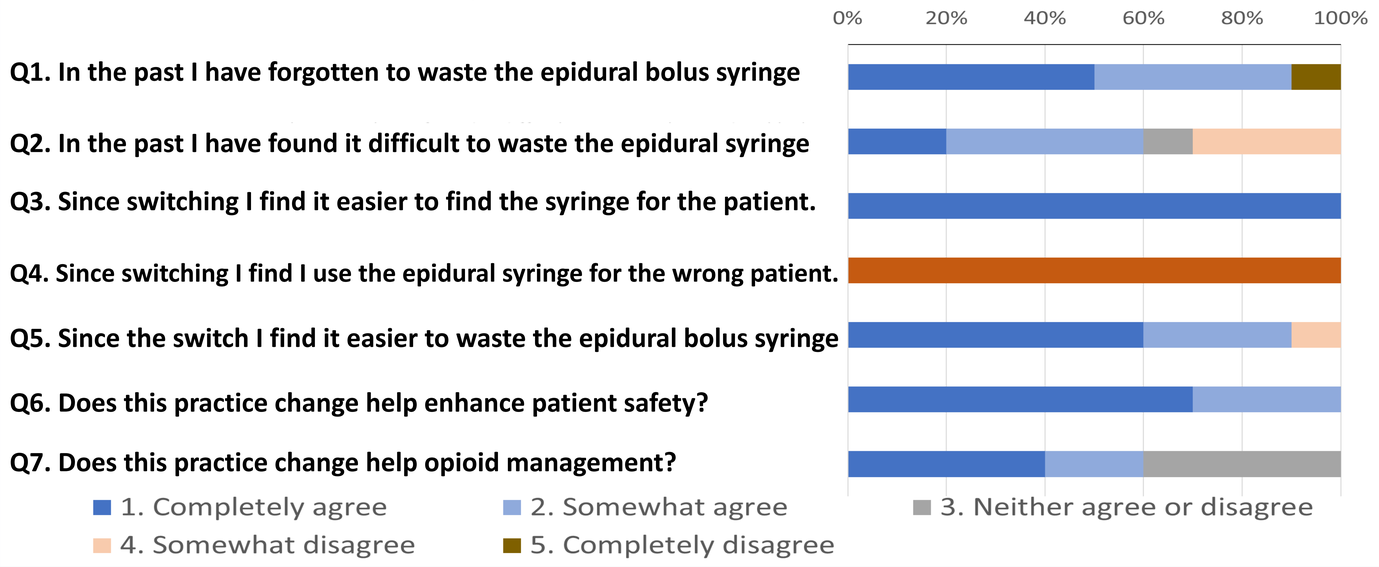
- All the bolus syringes to be placed in the locked epidural PCA box in each patient room. A novel use of an empty space in the box.

Epidural cart

Epidural PCA box

Benefit of this change

- Avoiding misuse of the syringes for wrong patients
- Anesthesia providers do not have to search for a correct syringe from the epidural cart, time and safety improvement
- Epidural bag and bolus syringes can be wasted correctly



Conclusion

A novel use of a free space in the commonly used epidural PCA box enhanced patient safety, work efficiency, and improved opioid management.