

Utilization of a Resource Algorithm to Enhance Departmental Communications

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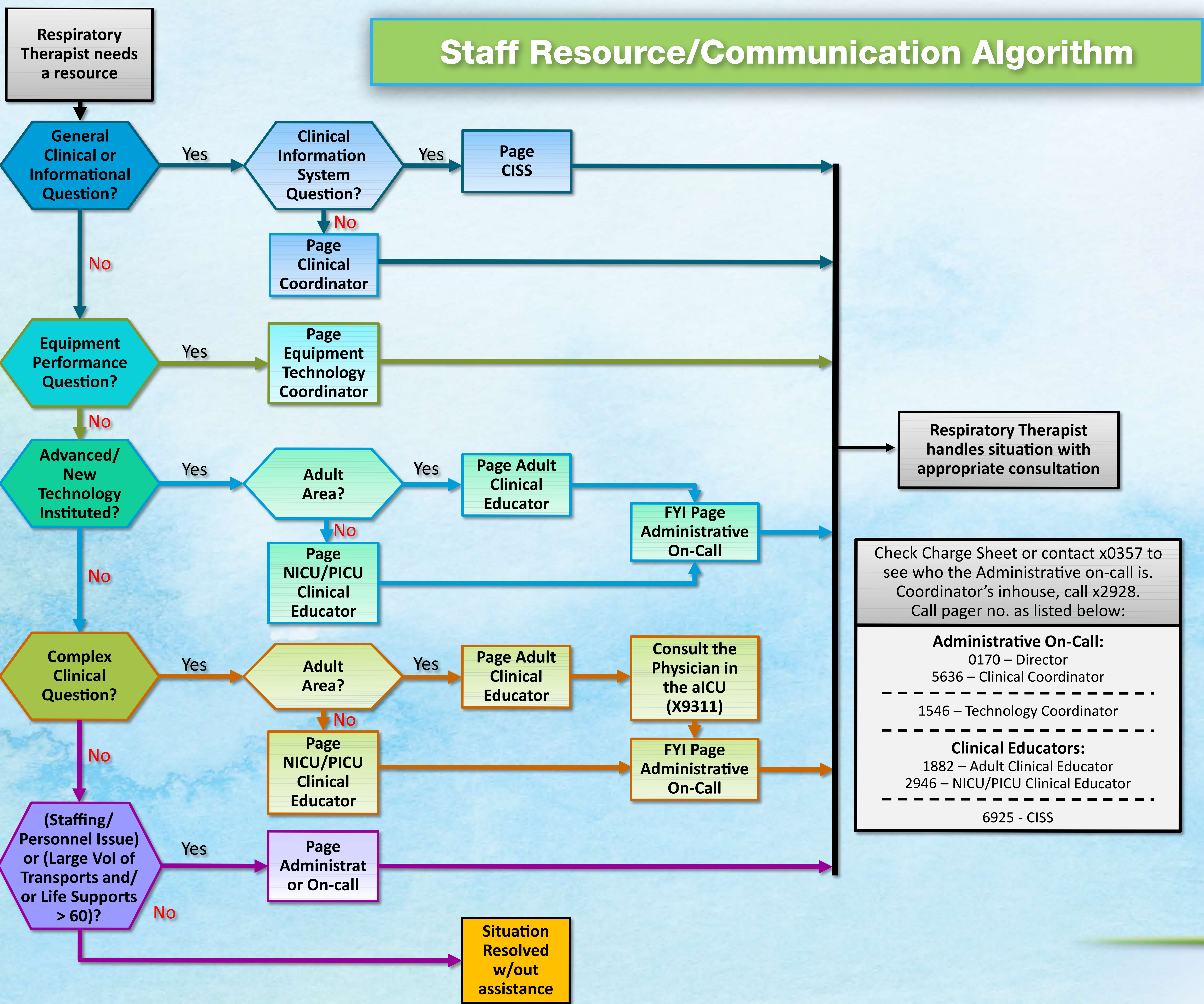
Problem

- Fluctuating workloads, changing patient acuity, and staffing patterns requires precise and proper communication.
- It is unrealistic to expect departmental leadership to be in-house twenty-four hours a day to address questions or alter workload assignments.
- Historically, staff was obligated to make front-line decisions, often without proper guidance and/or global insight. Clinical management of difficult patients would then be limited to in-house staff's clinical experiences. Often the proper resource was not contacted to assist in the problem resolution.
- Advanced technological interventions were delayed until departmental leadership was in-house.
- Equipment issues were often pushed aside until leadership was available. All of these issues often led to staff frustration and confusion.

Intervention

- To combat these issues, our department developed an on-call resource algorithm.
- Our algorithm addresses administrative, technological, and clinical management issues in order for the in-house staff to promptly contact the appropriate on-call leader.
- All staff charge therapists were provided education and process information on the utilization of the algorithm.
- Staff feedback was encouraged and questions were answered.

Methods



Results

- Post implementation of the resource algorithm revealed that the departmental communication was enhanced for staff.
- Questions were directed to the appropriate departmental leadership and answered in a timely and efficient manner.
- Staff is now working in a more efficient manner and is less frustrated and confused.
- Clinical management and technological interventions are now maintained twenty-four hours a day.

Conclusion

- Reduction of inappropriate phone calls to the Leadership Team.
- More efficient utilization of the Charge Therapist time.
- Enhanced Department communications and reduction in patient care delays.
- Improvement in staff satisfaction.



Prior to use of the Staff Resource/Communication Algorithm, there was confusion about who to call when a problem arose.



Once the Staff Resource/Communication Algorithm was developed and implemented, our charge therapists knew who to call which led to less confusion, better staff satisfaction and reduction in the delay of patient care.

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