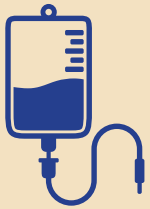
So Many Barcodes, So Little Time: A Quality Improvement Project to Improve Scanning of Blood Product Bags

Barcode scanning improves the safety of blood administration by reducing errors and mitigating risks associated with transfusions.

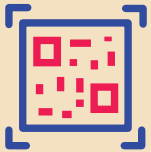
Rate of incorrectly administered units of blood transfused in the U.S.

Over a 10-year period, 5 fatalities were reported in New York State due to acute hemolytic transfusion reactions, including 1 death from administering blood to the wrong patient.



Challenges identified included the use of an incorrect QR code for scanner recalibration.

Recalibrating scanners with the correct QR code improved compliance greatly.



100%

scanning compliance in open heart recovery and cardiac care unit

Implementation and Expansion:
After successful pilot testing, recalibration procedures were expanded to all patient care units, resulting in an increase in overall scanning compliance from 69% to 96%.

Collaborative Approach:
The project involved collaboration among various departments and stakeholders, highlighting the effectiveness of a coordinated effort in addressing complex issues.

Technological Innovation:
Introduction of new scanner technology capable of processing multiple barcodes with a single scan promises further improvements in efficiency and reduction of errors in blood transfusion processes.

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