

Use of an App to Improve Patient Engagement with Enhanced Recovery Pathways

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Background/Introduction: Patient engagement with enhanced recovery pathways (ERP's) forms up to thirty percent of a pathway's portfolio of compliance elements. This includes consumption of preoperative carbohydrate drinks, early mobilisation and resumption of oral intake. In addition to these explicit elements; by making transparent the goals of a pathway, the patient may implicitly improve their pathway compliance, by challenging and engaging with clinicians on their progress and attainment of recovery milestones.

Methods: We used an app to track compliance with elements of enhanced recovery for colorectal surgery. The app contained both patient-facing and clinician-facing domains. From May - July 2015, all patients enrolled on a colorectal ERP in our institution (n=48) used the app. As they moved through the pathway, the app provided prompts and opportunities to remind and engage with them on the anticipated goals of recovery, explicitly making clear expectations such as postoperative exercise. (See figure 1)

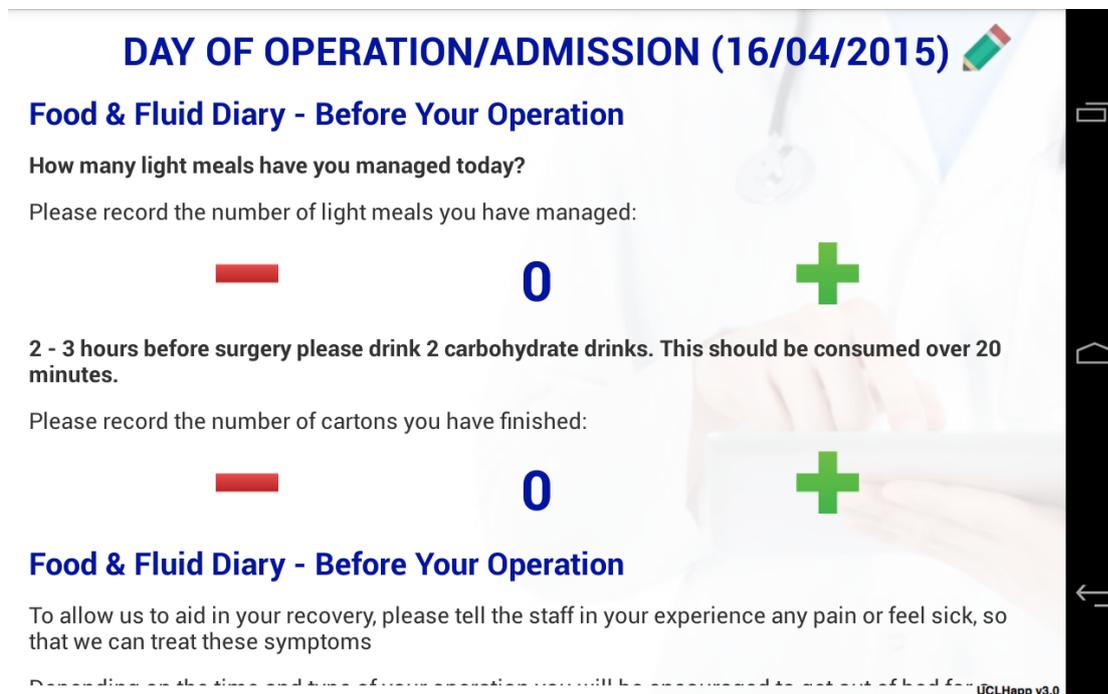


Figure 1: Typical screenshot of patient-facing interaction with colorectal ERP

Results: 100% (n=48) used the app. Compliance with patient-centred elements of the pathway was 93% (i.e. for preoperative CHO drinks, mobilisation and resumption of oral intake). This is compared to pathway compliance of 19% for preoperative CHO drinks, prior to the introduction of the app.

Conclusion: Compliance with the pathway since the introduction of the app has improved to 93%. By putting the patient at the centre of their care and making transparent the goals of recovery, compliance and outcomes are improved. We firmly believe that patients represent a powerful driver for improved delivery of healthcare. More efforts should be made to make patient information and goals of recovery readily available to patients. The architecture of apps provides a useful platform on which to pursue this venture.