

# The Impact of Electronic Nursing Handoff On Patient Transfer Times And Perception Of Pushback

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## Introduction

New York Presbyterian Hospital Weill Cornell Emergency Department welcomes its patients from both local and international communities. This can lead to increased wait times, decreased patient throughput and overcrowding. Current average transfer time from ER to inpatient units is about 90 minutes

## PICO STATEMENT

Can incorporating an electronic smartphrase handoff tool improve patient transfer times from the ED to inpatient areas while reducing the perception of **pushback** during reporting.

(Pushback is defined as delays from the inpatient units **during handoff that prevent a smooth transition of patients**)

## Methods

An electronic smartphrase handoff was created and used to provide more efficient reporting.

Transfer data times were collected from January 2025 during smartphrase tool integration and in-servicing to the ED nurses.

The smartphrase was fully inservice to ED nurses in July 2025.

Surveys were provided to nurses in the Emergency Department to gather information on the effectiveness of the smartphrase handoff tool and gauge perception of pushback. Pre-survey was sent out via email in June 2025, a project presentation was done with the ED nurses in July 2025 and post surveys were provided in the months August, September and October 2025.

## The Smartphrase

**SITUATION:**  
61 year old male Admitted for Anemia [D64.9]  
Pronouns: **Pronouns -**

**BACKGROUND:**  
Past Medical History:  
Diagnosis Date  
 • Anemia  
 • Anemia in stage 5 chronic kidney disease, not on chronic dialysis 11/04/2024  
 • CKD (chronic kidney disease)  
 • Coronary artery disease DES to RI (2014), LxCx and RCA (2017)  
 • Diabetes mellitus  
 • Gout  
 • HLD (hyperlipidemia)  
 • HTN (hypertension)  
 • PAD (peripheral artery disease) s/p PTA/stenting  
 • paroxysmal

Allergies: **No Active Allergies**

Code Status: **DNR/DNI**  
Isolation: **No active isolations**  
Language Spoken: **ENGLISH**  
Hearing/Visual Impairment: **Yes No -**

Levels of Observation: **Levels of Observation -**  
Watch Orders: **Yes No -**  
Risk for Violence: **Yes No -**

Fall Risks & Precautions: **Low, Medium, High -**

**ED VISIT:**  
Chief Complaint:  
Patient presents with:  
• **Abnormal Laboratory Result**

Vitals:  
03/20/25 1037  
BP: 158/74  
Pulse: 75  
Resp: 19  
Temp: 36.7 °C  
SpO2:

**EXAM:**  
Neurology - A&O: **A&O -** by **Alert Status -** Assist: **Assist -**

Respiratory - O2: **None on O2 administration -**

Cardiovascular - Telemetry: **YES/NO -**  
IV access: **\*\*\***

Gastrointestinal - Diet: **Diet -** | Pills: **med admin -** | Diarrhea: **YES/NO -** | Drains: **drains -**

Genitourinary - **Urinary Device -**

Skin - Intact: **Yes No: Yes -**

**CONTINUOUS MEDICATIONS:**  
IV Fluids: **Yes IV Fluids /No -**

Heparin: **Yes Heparin/ No -**  
Other: **Yes No -**

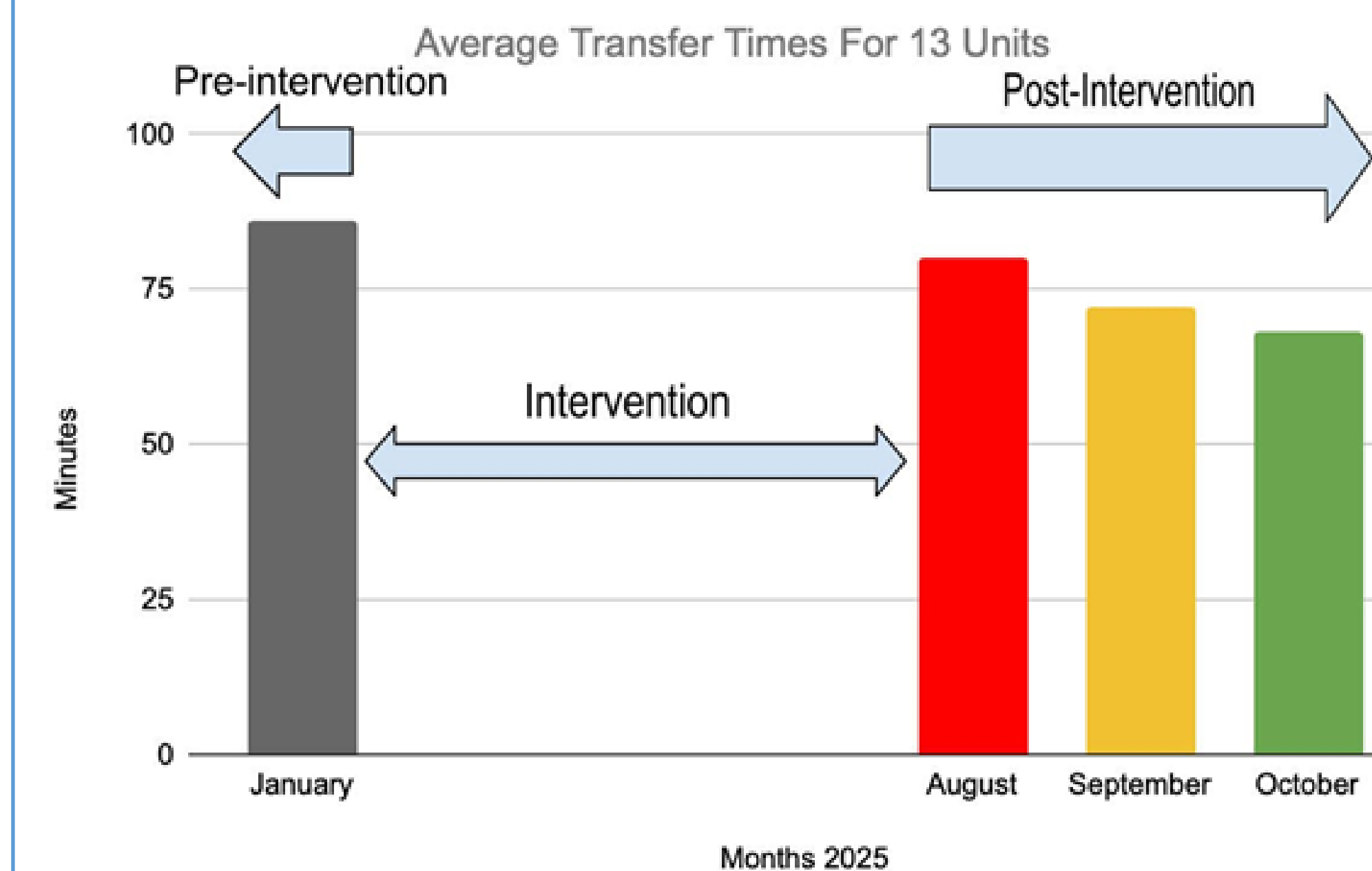
**OTHER:**  
Fingerstick: **Yes No -**

Pending tests/labs: **Yes No -**

Patient Belongings: **YES/NO -** If yes, please see Flowsheets for itemized list of belongings.  
• Belongings missing?: **YES/NO -**

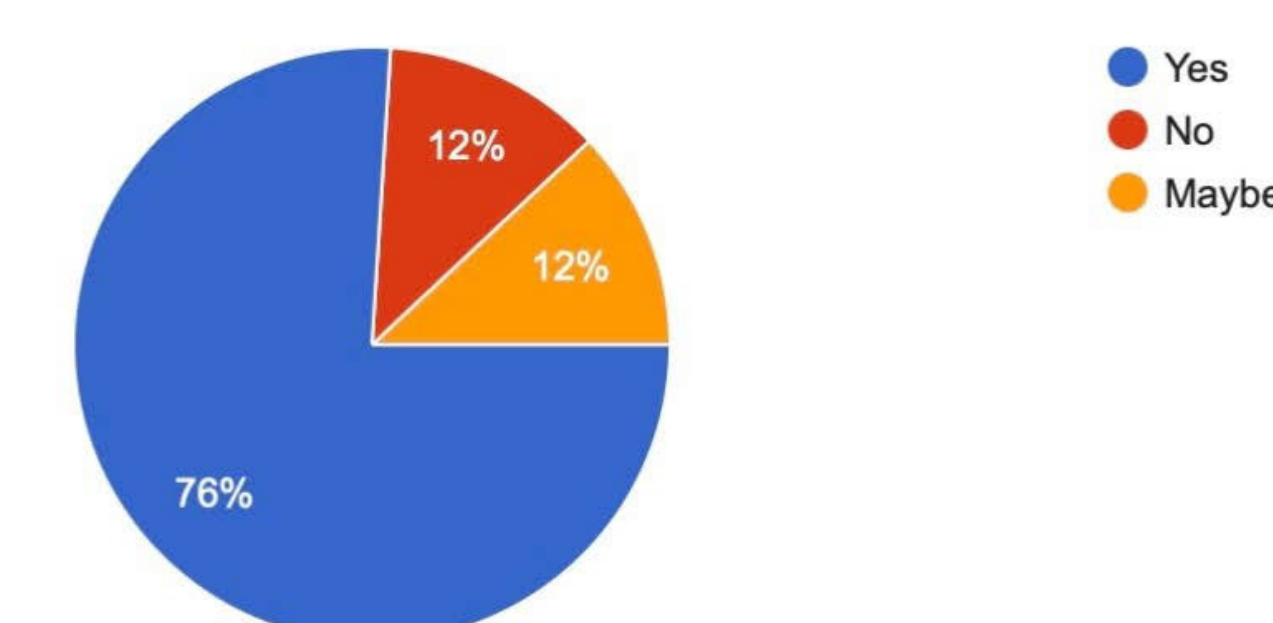
## Results

Transfer times saw decrease from the average 90 minutes by a 5-30 minutes change as evidenced by the graph below exhibiting the reduction in the average transfer time collectively from January to October 2025 for 13 acute inpatient units 5C, 5N, 5W (Acute patients only), 7C,7N,8C,10N,10S,10C, 11SA,11SB,14N,14S.



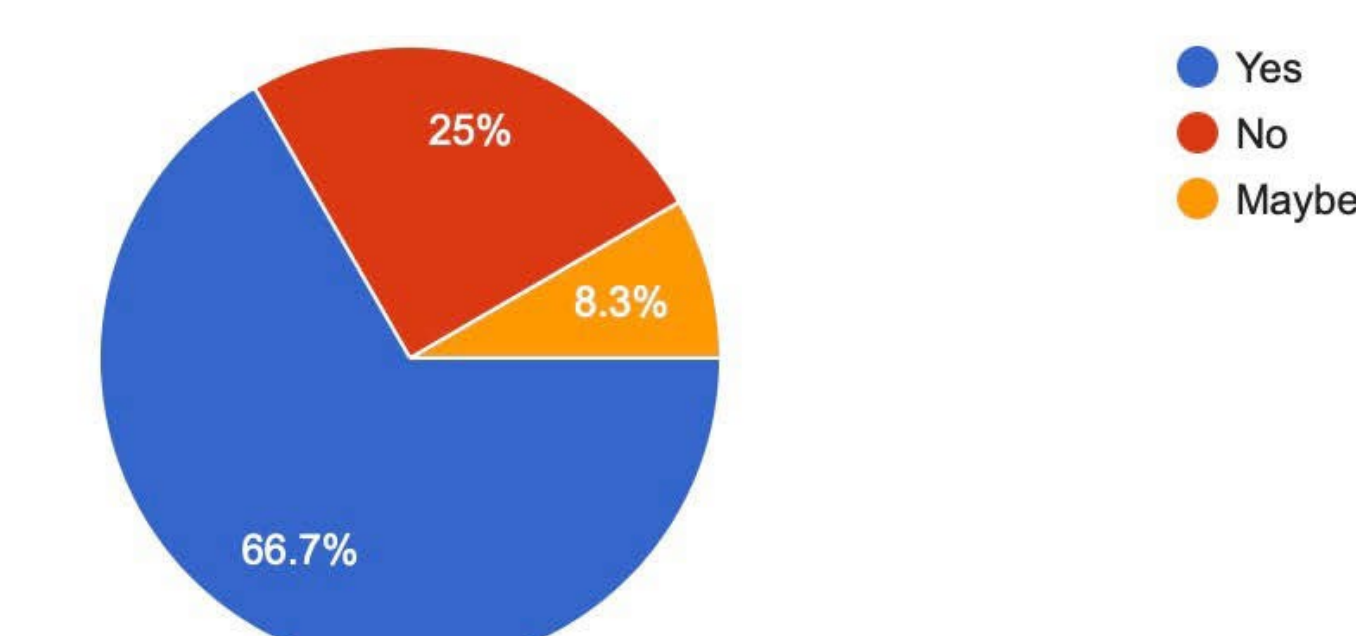
Emergency Department nurses report significant pushback in the presurvey phase.

Are you receiving pushback from the inpatient nurses when giving report?  
(Report define by using freetext, copy/paste doctors notes, other forms of non-smart phrase reporting)



Emergency Department nurses perceived less pushback during post survey evaluations.

Have you noticed reduced push back from the inpatient unit nurses since utilizing the smartphrase?



## Implications/ Conclusions

Challenges encountered during this project include:

1. In-servicing of the ER nurses on the smartphrase handoff
2. PPOC assignment changes
3. EVS delays in cleaning rooms
4. Patients with special accommodations (i.e safety watches)
5. Rapid response or emergency codes on the Inpatient unit during handoff
6. Adherence to changes in handoff from both ER and inpatient nurses
7. Transport delays

These factors potentially influenced transfer times through delaying the actual transfer or creating roadblocks.

## References



## Contact and Acknowledgement

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