

Can a SNS-mediated platform improve nurse-physician Communication?

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INTRODUCTION

Nurses and physicians have a mutually dependent relationship with a common goal of patient care. While phone communication has been the major mode for notification and requests, it has inherent difficulties, such as time delays. Moreover, new generation healthcare workers who have become accustomed to the non-face-to-face culture during the COVID-19 pandemic, are expressing job dissatisfaction and conflict due to phone communication, which is also affecting the decrease in patient satisfaction and nurse resignation.

OBJECTIVE

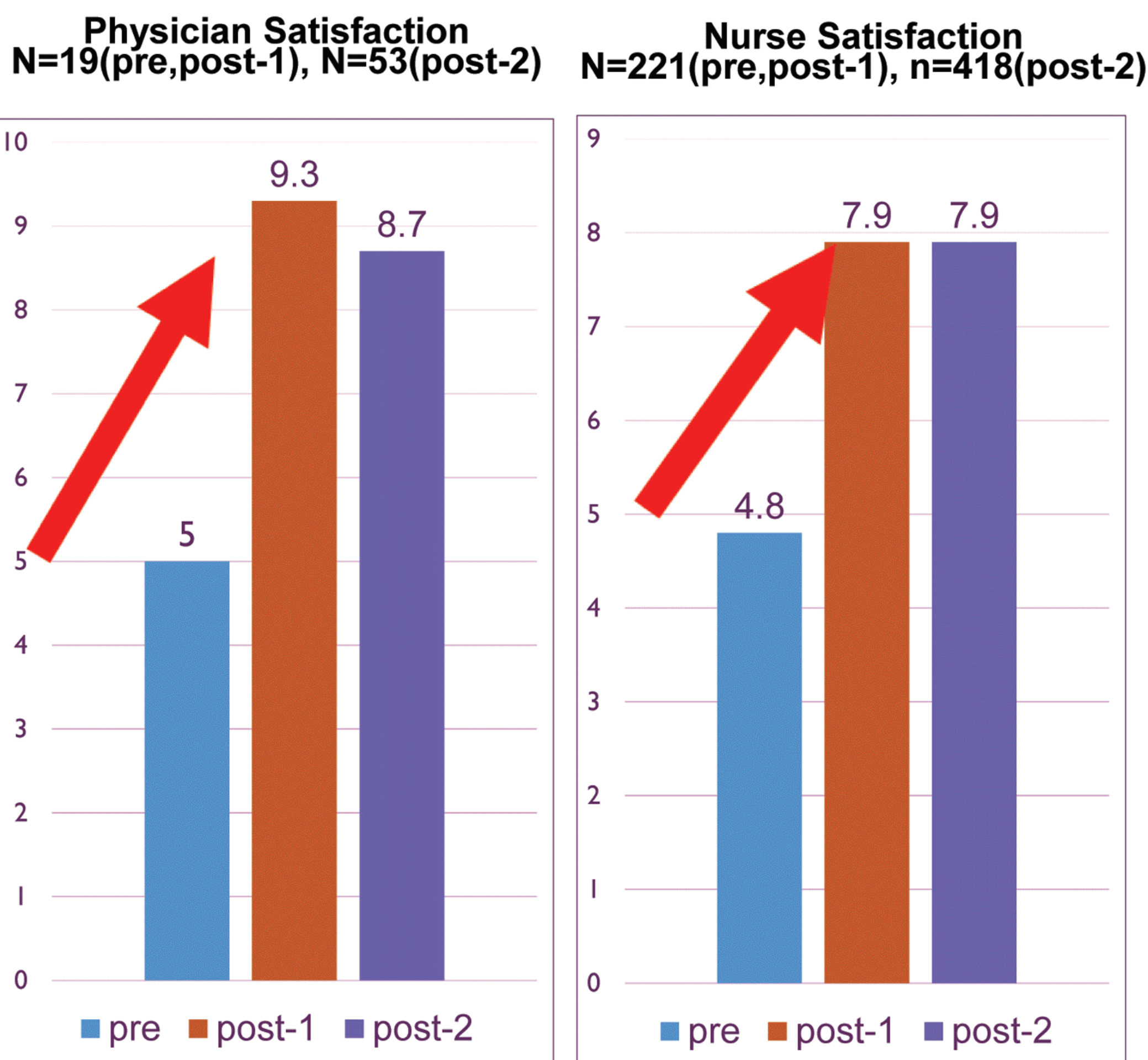
This study aimed to improve communication between oncology nurses and physicians through a social network service (SNS) platform.

METHODS

57 wards in Yonsei Cancer Center, Seoul, Korea, participated in the study. Microsoft (MS) Teams is reinforced by Microsoft security to protect data and privacy. MS Teams accounts were created for each ward and participants. Training was conducted using the manual, after a pilot phase (a week) of assigning intern routine work and chats. Data were collected before and after communication through MS Teams. User satisfaction (0-10 points) and subjective descriptions of strengths and weaknesses were investigated. Descriptive statistics and opportunity cost (reduction in time converted to cost) were analyzed and content analysis was done for the narrative data. 221 Nurses and 19 doctors participated in the study.

RESULTS

Over a period of four weeks, the number of telephone calls placed by nurse to physicians decreased by 62.9%p from 731 to 271, and call time also decreased by 64.5%p from 26,304 seconds to 9,327 seconds. Satisfaction increased from 4.8 points to 7.9 points in nurses and increased from 5 points to 8.7 points in physicians. In terms of opportunity cost, 32,000 USD in cost saving per year could be expected if the SNS-mediated communication is expanded to 50 more wards. Narrative responses included the following benefits: reduced number of calls and disconnected cases, less efforts in confirming tasks, strengthened responsibility based on clear evidence, quicker work processing, less emotional exhaustion and conflict cases, a more systematic work performance, less missed work, more efficient time management and patient satisfaction.



CONCLUSIONS

Using a SNS platform improved nurse-physician communication in the oncology wards in terms of decreased phone call time and increased satisfaction noted by both nurses and physicians over four weeks. A sizable cost saving effect and positive responses were also found. Accurate and efficient communication can contribute to improving the work environment and safety culture. Additional research on communication using various platforms, especially the impact on reducing human errors are needed.

References.

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