

## Aligning Universal Protocol at the Bedside

Continuous improvement is key to Barnes-Jewish Hospital's commitment to patient safety. In 2024, the hospital launched a change to the bedside procedure process. The goal is consistent adoption of the Universal Protocol—correct procedure is performed on the correct patient and on the correct site—for every procedure.

Instrumental in the new process is the expanded role of nursing and an updated time-out board to ensure complete adherence to the protocol. The interactive procedural time-out board displays the pre-procedure steps to confirm in real time that the protocol is followed.

One of the early adopters and integration successes was the team on 4400 Surgical Burn Trauma ICU, one of three units that was part of the pilot program in the summer of 2024.

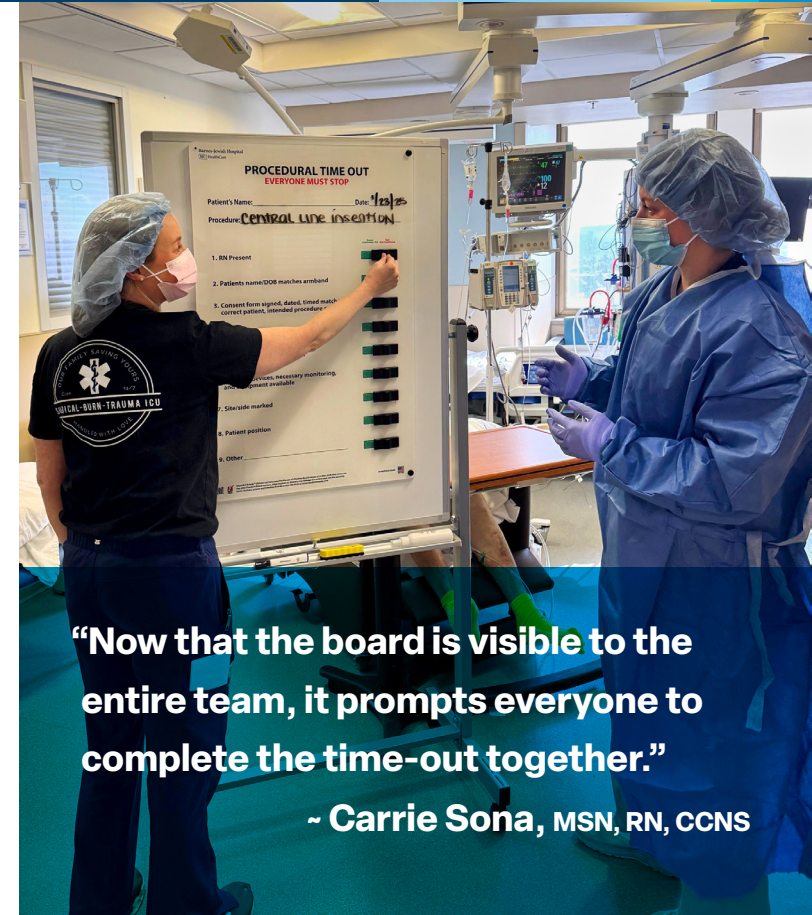


A clinical team on 4400 Surgical Burn Trauma ICU performs a procedure following the collective time-out.

Historically, nurses on 44 ICU have participated in bedside procedures. According to Rachel Elder, BSN, RN, assistant nurse manager, and Carrie Sona, MSN, RN, CCNS, clinical nurse specialist, the more significant change was the time-out board. “Previously, participation in the Universal Protocol for bedside procedures was variable,” says Carrie. “Now that the board is visible to the entire team, it prompts everyone to complete the time-out together.”

The number of time-out boards on a nursing unit depends on its size. 44 ICU has three boards due to the volume of procedures completed on the unit. “The boards mirror the documentation required for Universal Protocol compliance,” says Rachel. “Once the group time-out is complete, the nurse documents it in the electronic medical record.”

The new protocol launched hospital-wide in September 2024. Part of the initiative was the creation of a permanent Procedural Safety Oversight Committee that meets monthly. Key to the success of the oversight is a dyad partnership consisting of a medical director and nurse leader from each area of the hospital.



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**~ Carrie Sona, MSN, RN, CCNS**