

Right Time, Right Patient, Right Priority: Boosting Triage Accuracy in Novice Nurses

Laura LaMaina, MSN, RN, NPD-BC, CPEN, TCRN, Shannon Rutherford, BSN, RN, CPEN
Cohen Children's Medical Center – Northwell Health, New Hyde Park, NY
Donald and Barbara Zucker School of Medicine at Hofstra/Northwell

Background

- Accurate and timely triage is essential for optimal patient flow, resource allocation, and patient satisfaction in the Emergency Department (ED).
- Experience gaps can lead to inconsistent acuity scoring.

Significance

- Baseline assessment revealed 83% reliability for experienced nurse (>3 yrs) versus 48% for novice nurse (< 3 yrs) in triage scoring.
- Inconsistent triage threatens patient safety and delays care.

Aim

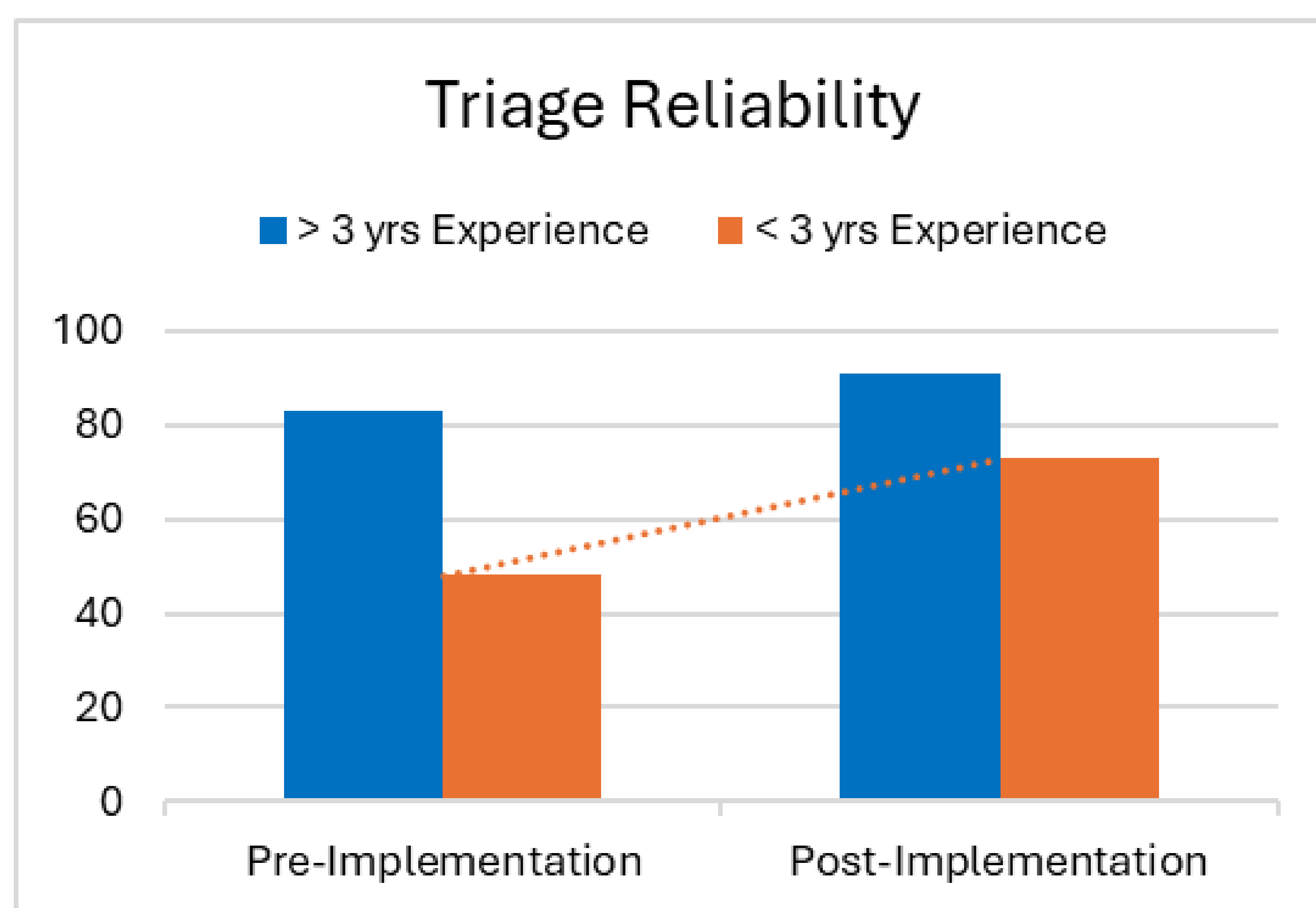
- Enhance novice nurses triage accuracy and consistency through targeted training, improving inter-rater reliability and patient outcomes.

Implementation

- Quality Improvement Project using Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycles.
- Form champion group of triage nurses for precepting.
- Educate triage champions.
- Provide didactic sessions and case scenario discussions to novice nurses.
- Provide 36 hours of supervised clinical experiences.

Results

- 6 months post implementation.
- Nurses with > 3 yrs experience had reliability scores of 91%.
- Nurses with < 3 yrs experience had reliability scores of 73%.
- This represents a 52% increase in reliability scores.



Recommendations

- Make this method of triage training novice nurses the standard of practice.
- Maintain standardization of the triage training process to ensure improved accuracy of acuity scores and reduced ED wait times.
- Measure inter-reliability scores at 1 year.

References

