

## Tool #4

## Disruption Identification Exercise

**Overview:** The goal of this exercise is to help frontline staff gain a greater understanding of the disruptions that patients encounter while receiving care on the unit. This tool contains two key steps—the first focuses on identifying patient disruptions and the second on changing workflow to minimize them.

**Type of exercise:** Workflow modification

**Time required:**

Step	Approximate Time Allocation	Owner
Disruption Identification	3 hours across 1 week	Frontline Nurse
Disruption Classification Exercise	60 minutes	Frontline Nurse
Concluding Discussion	10 to 30 minutes	Manager/Educator

**Targeted skill:** Equipping caregivers to be more aware of patient disruptions and modifying unit workflow and individual practice to minimize targeted disruptions

**Tool contents and intended audience:**

Section	Audience
Tool Implementation Guide	Manager/Educator
Staff Exercise	Frontline Nurse
Discussion Guide	Manager/Educator
Evaluation Guide	Manager/Educator

### Tool Implementation Guide

**I:** Select frontline staff members to complete this exercise. This exercise is applicable for all staff members.

**II:** Share this exercise with participating staff members and agree upon a deadline for completion. The Nursing Executive Center recommends setting a deadline of two to three weeks after sharing the exercise with participants. Establish regular check-ins across the exercise period to answer staff questions.

**III:** After completion, assess the exercise using the Evaluation Guide. Use the Discussion Guide to initiate a conversation about participants' experiences completing the exercise.

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**Step One: Identify Common Patient Disruptions.** Spend one week closely observing the care of your patients and the care of other patients on your units. Your goal is to identify the most acute sources of disruptions for patients on your unit. Answer the questions below to identify these disruptions.

1. What elements of care disrupted your patients while they were sleeping or resting?

Sample: *Vital signs taken every four hours*

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_
- d. \_\_\_\_\_
- e. \_\_\_\_\_
- f. \_\_\_\_\_

2. What elements of care (or experiences on the unit) represent the largest disruptions to patients' at-home routines?

Sample: *Meals delivered at set times instead of patients eating when they want to*

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_
- d. \_\_\_\_\_
- e. \_\_\_\_\_
- f. \_\_\_\_\_

3. What hospital rules or regulations do patients find unnecessarily strict or inflexible?

Sample: *Visiting hours limited*

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_
- d. \_\_\_\_\_
- e. \_\_\_\_\_
- f. \_\_\_\_\_

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**Step Two: Brainstorm How to Eliminate or Minimize Identified Disruptions.** Select three to five of the disruptions you identified in Step One. In the chart below, write each disruption in a separate box in the column labeled "Identified Disruption." For each disruption, answer the corresponding questions in the chart

Identified Disruption	Is the disruption within the control of a single RN, unit, or the whole hospital?	If within the control of an RN or unit, how can it be solved?	If it is within the control of the whole hospital, how can it be minimized in your practice?
<i>Hospital policy does not allow pets; patient misses her dog</i>	<i>Whole hospital</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>Ask patient's daughter to bring in pictures of the dog</i>
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**Disruption Identification Exercise****Evaluation Guide**

Use the evaluation criteria below to assess participants' exercises. For each criterion, check the box with the text that most closely describes the participants' work. Check marks on the right-hand side of the spectrum may indicate a greater opportunity for improvement.

**Disruption identification**

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participant captures wide range of patient disruptions	Participant captures handful of important patient disruptions	Participant captures limited number of patient disruptions	Exercise incomplete

**Viability of proposed next steps**

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participant presents multiple, well-considered responses to identified disruptions	Participant presents between one and two, well-considered responses to identified disruptions	Participant presents impractical or ambiguous responses to identified disruptions	Participant fails to identify responses to identified disruptions

**Discussion Guide**

Use the Discussion Guide below to initiate a conversation about participants' experiences completing the exercise.

1. Which disruption was most acute for your patients?
2. How does that disruption impact patients?
3. How do you think your proposed next steps will mitigate that disruption moving forward?
4. What disruptions did this exercise surface that you hadn't thought about before?
5. How does greater awareness of patient disruptions impact your practice?