Background

The RCSENG guidelines1 recommend that consent is obtained prior to the day of surgery and patients are given adequate time with written information to make an informed decision. A baseline study of urology patients undergoing a surgical procedure at Wythenshawe Hospital found that these recommendations were being met in only 16% of cases. This QIP aimed to improve this and the overall consenting process for urological procedures at Wythenshawe Hospital.

Methods

Process mapping identified areas for improvement. Interventions implemented through PDSA cycles targeting the identified areas included: staff education, posters prompting clinicians and a further awareness reminder at a departmental meeting. Data for patients undergoing surgery from April-August 2019 was gathered alongside these interventions.

Results

The data incorporated 98 patients. 76% of patients had completed consent forms prior to the day of surgery and 73% had been given written information in the form of a clinic letter or a leaflet. This represented a shift from the baseline of 60%.

Key messages

Education, discussion and posters reinforcing the importance of timely consent were effective interventions. Going forward, standardised clinic letters with stock phrases outlining the risks of common procedures will be designed and staff education will continue in order to improve the consenting process for clinicians and patients alike.

1) Royal College of Surgeons of England. Consent: Supported Decision-Making. A guide to good practice. 2016.