

Obstructive Sleep Apnea Screening

Obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) is a prevalent disease that is underdiagnosed and undertreated. OSA increases the risk of numerous health problems, including cardiovascular disease. Additionally, the presence of OSA presents special challenges to the administration of anesthesia and pain medications that may affect respiration or relax muscles.

Estimates indicate that 22 million Americans have sleep apnea, with 80 percent of the cases of moderate and severe OSA undiagnosed.¹ Thus, it is imperative for healthcare professionals to identify patients with OSA symptoms, including those patients in high-risk groups.

Many people do not realize they have OSA, however, so the need for screening is paramount for patient safety. Healthcare organizations that do not have written policies and procedures for OSA screening or that have not implemented OSA screening tools and clinical pathways should consider establishing a multidisciplinary committee to develop and oversee an OSA screening initiative.

This checklist is intended to help healthcare leaders and providers assess their policies and practices for identifying, monitoring, and caring for patients diagnosed with, or at risk for, OSA.

	Yes	No
Does your healthcare organization have a written policy that requires healthcare providers to screen patients (either all inpatients or patients receiving anesthesia and/or opioids) for the risk or diagnosis of OSA?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does your healthcare organization have a written procedure that describes how to facilitate the OSA screening policy?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the written procedure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly define who is responsible for OSA screening? Specifically state which OSA screening tool should be used to identify patients who are at risk for, or diagnosed with, OSA? 	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

	Yes	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define the scope of screening — e.g., all inpatient admissions or just patients receiving anesthesia and/or opioids? • Explain the method for communicating screening results? • List the necessary screening equipment, such as pulse oximetry, capnometry, and continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP)? • Clarify the need for patient discharge instructions? • Include a plan for staff education? • Describe the process for quality monitoring? 	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Does your healthcare organization’s OSA clinical pathway include implementing the following clinical interventions when appropriate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessing inpatient vs. outpatient status based on patients’ conditions? • Using anesthesia techniques that minimize risk? • Using complete reversal neuromuscular blockade at the end of procedures? • Performing safe extubation postoperatively? • Avoiding placing patients in the supine position (if possible)? • Minimizing the use of analgesics (e.g., opioids and sedatives)? • Appropriately monitoring patients — e.g., with continuous pulse oximetry or capnometry (maintaining SpO2 of 92 percent or greater)? • Educating patients/families regarding postdischarge risks and further evaluation and management? • Using CPAP (e.g., having patients bring in their CPAP masks and tubing)? • Elevating the head of bed >30 degrees or lateral position? • Assessing and documenting periods of apnea greater than 10 seconds during patient sleep? • Using OSA identification bands? 	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

	Yes	No
Does your organization have a multidisciplinary committee responsible for monitoring the quality of OSA screening implementation and adverse events associated with OSA?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Endnote

¹ American Sleep Apnea Association. (n.d.). *Sleep apnea information for clinicians*. Retrieved from www.sleephealth.org/asaa/sleep-apnea-information-for-clinicians/

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