MEDSAFE Annual Conference 2012

Prescribed Strategies for Today’s Challenges

October 4, 2012
HCAHPS Medication Safety
Journey to Improvement

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10/4/12
The research

- 66% of patients surveyed did not know the duration of treatment of their medications.
- Only 35% of patients knew the side effects of their medications.

Patients who have a clear understanding of their after-hospital care instructions, including how to take their medicines, are 30% less likely to be readmitted or visit the Emergency Department than those who lack this information.

Total cost per patient was $412 lower for the patients who received complete information on how to take their medications.

Our Charge

- Improve patient outcomes as measured by the HCAHPS scores for these questions:
  - Before giving you any new medicine, how often did hospital staff tell you what the medicine was for?
  - Before giving you any new medicine, how often did hospital staff describe possible side effects in a way you could understand?
Our Journey

- HCAHPS questions divided in functional groups
  - Noise at night
  - Responsiveness of staff
  - Cleanliness
  - Pain Mgmt
  - Communication with nurses
  - Communication with doctors
  - Communication about Medication
Committees formed for each functional group
Chairs for each group became the membership for the HCAHPS Steering Committee
Steering Committee meets each month
  ◦ Review survey data
  ◦ Talk about each group's progress and problems
  ◦ Share best practices and try to coordinate communications and initiatives for staff
Nurses and a pharmacist from various units

Started monthly meetings in November 2010

Avg score for two medication questions= 58

Brainstormed improvements and identified barriers

Used *The HCAHPS Handbook: Hardwire Your Hospital for pay–for–Performance Success*

  By Quint Studer, Brian C Robinson, and Karen Cook
Selected a clear, easy to read patient medication handout source, and made a link available on our Intranet page and in Nursing Documentation

Revised Patient Discharge Instruction sheet to prompt distribution of medication handouts at discharge

Revised Post-Discharge Phone Call sheet to prompt nurses to ask patients about their medications.
Our pilot nursing unit determined their most commonly used medications

Patient handouts for these medications were preprinted and kept on file
- The “indication” and “side effects” sections were pre-highlighted

Created special patient medication folders for patients to store their handouts
- The folders prominently stated “Medications: Purpose and Side Effect Information”
Two members of our committee started these procedures on their units as a pilot.
We followed the HCAHPS scores of these two units.
HCAHPS scores for these units started to trend upward.
Approval for Rollout

- The procedures were tweaked by our Communication About Medications group based on feedback from the pilot.
- Procedures were summarized and taken to Best Practice Council for approval.
- Also presented to HCAHPS Steering Committee.
- Approved for hospital-wide rollout.
Rollout

- Instructions for these procedures were sent to all Nurse Managers
- Information presented at Nurse Manager meeting
- Created a story board about this process and rotated it through all units
- Mailed large color graphs of monthly HCAHPS scores to each unit for posting on the unit
- Turned on some functionality of GetWell Network
Tips from The HCAHPS Handbook: Hardwire Your Hospital for Pay-for-Performance Success

Key Words at Key Times

- Messages need to be repeated; maybe to family
- Explain the *what* and the *why* to patients
- Hardwire an explanation of every medication with every dosage given
  - “Before I give you this medication, do you know what it is for and what side effects it may have?”
- Encourage two-way communication – take time to pause as you explain
- Ask for compliance: “Is there anything that might prevent you from taking this medication when you go home?”
Tips from *The HCAHPS Handbook: Hardwire Your Hospital for Pay-for-Performance Success*

- Review medications with the nurse coming on and the patient together (Bedside Report)
  - Let patient do it!
  - Reinforces patient understanding
  - Patient doesn’t have to worry that the new nurse won’t know about the medications
Nurse leaders or their designee should round on all patients every day and ask if they were told what their medication are for, and about potential side effects.

They can teach the patient immediately, or ask the patient’s nurse to follow-up.
Results

HCAHPS Scores for Communication About Medication Questions
Average of Both Questions: All Patient Care Areas

% ALWAYS Score

What we found

- Results varied from month to month and unit to unit; had to look at trends, not any one month
- Progress has been consistent but slow
- The June uptick was coming mostly from one unit!
- That unit was 3S, the unit of our next presenter!