Solution: Product Standardization: A Collaborative Process for Improved Patient Outcomes and Patient Safety Across the Johns Hopkins Health System

Organization: The Johns Hopkins Health System
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IDENTIFICATION:
Medical products are used by every healthcare worker in the care of their patients. Products have to be clinically acceptable, safe for both patients and staff, and available when needed. At the end of 2000, nurses from The Johns Hopkins Hospital and Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center met during a tour of the on-site warehouse and realized they had similar concerns regarding product selection decisions. Since both shared the same supply chain support services, a decision was made to convene and collaborate. Issues consisted of how products could be reviewed and standardized, introduced in a safe and efficient manner, and provide the best quality to the patient. Data consists of minutes, financial reports showing cost savings and increases, and summaries of evaluations supporting product decisions.

PROCESS:
In January 2001, the inaugural meeting of the Johns Hopkins Health System (JHHS) Product Standardization Committee was held and began to meet on a quarterly then monthly basis to focus on clinical issues. Until 2004, both hospitals maintained their own separate product review committees but a decision was made to expand the role of the standardization committee to encompass additional responsibilities. The individual teams were disbanded and consolidated into the JHHS Clinical Products Value Analysis Committee (CPVAC). The JHH Product Safety Committee, whose role it was to look at product changes to increase worker safety, also disbanded and was rolled into the CPVAC responsibilities. This entire consolidation has made the process more efficient by no longer duplicating efforts.

The committee uses the value analysis process for reviewing products. The process entails defining a need, assessing the current practices and products, identifying, assessing and choosing alternatives, and implementing the choice.

SOLUTION:
The Clinical Products Value Analysis Committee (CPVAC) is very active and well represented by an interdisciplinary team consisting of both clinician and non-clinicians. The minutes are communicated to a variety of staff members at all of our hospitals and several affiliates. This
long-standing solution was implemented and accomplished by providing a forum for the review and purchase of clinical products that are consistent with “best practices” by:

- Providing a proactive, systematic process for the review, selection, evaluation, and implementation of new or replacement clinical products. The process includes the determination of clinical necessity and effectiveness, patient and health care worker safety concerns, staff education, projected usage, uniqueness of the item or product line, product compatibility with other systems, duplication reduction and financial analysis.

- Ensuring input from appropriate departments and utilizing clinical experts as consultants in product areas where the committee has limited expertise.

- Providing a mechanism for communication and resolution of product related issues.

The Johns Hopkins Health System remains committed to providing a safe environment for our patients and staff by purchasing quality products. The opportunities for this committee remain wide open by allowing and encouraging staff to have a voice in the selection of products that may improve patient care and comfort, increase safety, and reduce costs.