Use of Written Handouts to Facilitate Inpatient Medication Counseling and Improve HCAHPS Scores

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BACKGROUND

• Patient satisfaction is influenced by many factors, including understanding new medications.
• Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Providers (HCAHPS) surveys are used to interpret patients’ satisfaction with medication counseling during their hospital stay.
• Previous studies increased patient satisfaction and HCAHPS scores when patients were provided with handouts on side effects and encouraged to ask questions.
• However, there is limited information about the use of more comprehensive written medication education materials for the improvement of patient satisfaction.

OBJECTIVES

• Assess nurses’ opinions on medication counseling and use of written handouts, as determined through a pre- and post-survey.
• Increase patient satisfaction, as assessed through HCAHPS survey results.

METHODS

Study Measures: Independent Variables

Disease states covered by handouts, counseling prevalence, time spent counseling, patient-centered barriers to counseling, other counseling methods used, and nurses’ concerns with meeting HCAHPS scores goals.

Study Measures: Dependent Variables

1. Nurses’ opinions on counseling and use of medication handouts for myocardial infarction and heart failure
   Questions asked: How often do you provide education on indication/side effects prior to giving a new medication?
   • “All of the time” or “Frequently” added together were greater for the post-survey than the pre-survey.
   2. Improvement in HCAHPS medication counseling scores.
   Considered greater patient satisfaction if communication about medications survey results were greater for 2020 than 2019

Data Analysis:

• Descriptive statistics such as mean, mode, and percentages were used to describe survey responses and HCAHPS scores.

RESULTS

Study Sample Size:

• Pre-Survey: 25 nurses; Post-Survey: 19 nurses

Graph 1: Nurses’ Perceived Barriers to Counseling

Table 1: Nurses’ Responses to Questions on Medication Counseling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Pre-Survey</th>
<th>Post-Survey</th>
<th>Likert Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How often do you provide medication education on indication prior to giving a new medication? (No. %)</td>
<td>18 (72)</td>
<td>12 (63)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often do you provide medication counseling on side effects prior to giving a new medication? (No. %)</td>
<td>18 (72)</td>
<td>13 (69)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When performing medication counseling, how often do you refer the patient to a pharmacist or doctor if they have additional questions after counseling? (No. %)</td>
<td>20 (80)</td>
<td>15 (79)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Handout Ranking:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Handouts ranked an average of 7.8 for effectiveness</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Average rating for helpfulness was 7.4</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

CONCLUSION

• COVID-19 pandemic resulting in increased nurse workload and decreased time
• Pool of nurses in the pre- versus post-survey was slightly different due to new hires and staff turnover

• Some barriers to medication counseling may be overcome with handouts including medication purpose and side effects.
• This project may have enhanced understanding of medications.
• Future studies are needed to determine if the handouts increase effectiveness of medication counseling and improve patient satisfaction.