Improvement of Patient Satisfaction and Medication Education Through Physical Teaching Tools
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This study was conducted on two cardiac telemetry units in a 493 bed hospital. Pre-survey to nursing: August 2023
New handouts available for use: Starting October 2023
Secondary outcome: Timeline:
Post-survey to nursing: November 2023

The impact of the handouts was gauged by the responses of the nurses and changes in HCAHPS (Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems) scores was very minimal.

- The handouts were often received positively by the nurses but frequently underutilized due to forgetting they were available. This shortcoming could possibly be improved by increasing promotion of handout use.

- By surveying nurses directly we were able to view their perspective on the importance of medication education along with some of the barriers they faced.

- The handouts continue to be available in the units affected by the study and were also expanded into outpatient clinics.

- Strengths: Future improvements possible from surveying nurses.

- Limitations: Lack of direct feedback from patients. Limited handout use.

- Promotion to nurses, and not all patients on the units were affected by the disease states the handouts were created for limiting potential effects.

- Nurses encounter many barriers to performing meaningful medication counseling during hospitalization.

- Disease-state specific medication handouts can be helpful to facilitate counseling.

- Adequate promotion of the materials is essential for success.

- Further improvement and tool development is needed to improve the medication education provided by nurses and other health care providers.

- Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) is a patient survey that allows for objective comparisons between hospitals. They include a section on communication and education about medications. 

- Possible ways to improve scores include altering how nurses teach about medications, and having small information guides that incorporate pictures placed in spaces that a patient would frequently see.

- It is recommended to keep tools/education for patients simple and at a reading level around the 6th grade. 

- This study experimented with nursing tools that can potentially assist in the education of patients on medications and is aimed to allow for higher quality medication education that a patient can refer back to at a later time to increase understanding of their medications.

- This study was conducted on two cardiac telemetry units in a 493 bed community-teaching hospital.

- Medication education handouts over common medications for atrial fibrillation and heart failure were created/updated.

- Primary outcome: RN survey results regarding perceptions on medication counseling and utility of the provided medication education handouts.

- Secondary outcome: HCAHPS survey results for medication counseling

- Timeline:
  - Pre-survey to nursing: August 2023
  - New handouts available for use: Starting October 2023
  - Post-survey to nursing: November 2023

- Figure 1: Heart Failure Medication Education Handout Example

Table 1: Universal Pre- and Post-Survey Questions

| Question #1 | How often do you use the new medication handouts in the med room to assist with patient counseling for applicable patients? |
| Question #2 | I think the information on the new education handouts in the med room is adequate and well-designed |
| Question #3 | How likely are you to tell your patients the possible side effects of a new medication before it is given? |
| Question #4 | How often do you tell patients the indication (i.e. what it is being used for) of a new medication before it is given? |
| Question #5 | How often do you tell patients about how often they need to take their medications? |
| Question #6 | How often do you utilize the back teach method when providing patient medication counseling? |
| Question #7 | How likely are you to tell your patients about the possible indications for a new medication? |
| Question #8 | How often do you utilize the back teach method when providing patient medication counseling? |

Table 2: Handout-Specific Questions on Post-Survey

| Question #1 | How often do you use the new medication handouts in the med room to assist with patient counseling for applicable patients? |
| Question #2 | I think the information on the new education handouts in the med room is adequate and well-designed |
| Question #3 | How likely are you to tell your patients the possible side effects of a new medication before it is given? |
| Question #4 | How often do you tell patients the indication (i.e. what it is being used for) of a new medication before it is given? |
| Question #5 | How often do you tell patients about how often they need to take their medications? |
| Question #6 | How often do you utilize the back teach method when providing patient medication counseling? |
| Question #7 | How likely are you to tell your patients about the possible indications for a new medication? |
| Question #8 | How often do you utilize the back teach method when providing patient medication counseling? |

Primary Outcome: Nursing Survey Results
- The pre-survey received 28 responses and the post-survey received 14 responses.
- There were eight universal questions asked on each survey (Table 1) and seven handout-specific questions on the post-survey (Table 2).
- Universal questions responses were assigned a numerical value one through five, which was used to calculate an average.
- The primary outcome of RN survey results was the following:
  - The universal questions had similar responses in the pre- and post-survey (Figure 2). 
  - Largest reported barrier to medication education was patient understanding of the education (57.1%), time available (28.6%), and resources available (7.1%).
  - Handouts were less than likely to be used with “sometimes” (35.7%) or less being the most frequent answer.
  - Nurses overall thought the handouts were well designed and adequate with 11/14 (78.5%) agreeing or strongly agreeing.
  - Majority also found the handout helpful with 11/14 (78.5%) agreeing or strongly agreeing.
  - Most common reason for the handouts not being used was forgetting about them being available 12/14 (87.1%).
  - Majority of nurses said that the patients were receptive to the use of the handouts with 8/14 (57.1%) agreeing or strongly agreeing.

Secondary Outcome: Change in HCAHPS scores
- For the two months before the handouts were made available (August and September 2023) the total score was 68/123 (55.3%).
- For the two months after the handouts were made available (October and November 2023) the total score was 65/119 (54.6%).

Discussion
- Through Physical Teaching Tools

Figure 2: Comparison of Survey Results Between Pre and Post-Surveys

Figure 1: Heart Failure Medication Education Handout Example

References