

Medication Education: Improving Patient Understanding

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PURPOSE

Compile and condense medication education given to patients on discharge in order to improve patient knowledge and understanding of medications upon discharge

Five of the 25 questions on the HCAHPS 2016 Survey deal directly with patient medication and understanding (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, 2016)

Improve HCAHPS scores on patient education by providing an informational handout that patients can quickly read and use for questions

3. During this hospital stay, how often did nurses explain things in a way you could understand?

1 Never
2 Sometimes
3 Usually
4 Always

15. During this hospital stay, were you given any medicine that you had not taken before?

1 Yes
2 No If No, Go to Question 18

16. Before giving you any new medicine, how often did hospital staff tell you what the medicine was for?

1 Never
2 Sometimes
3 Usually
4 Always

17. Before giving you any new medicine, how often did hospital staff describe possible side effects in a way you could understand?

1 Never
2 Sometimes
3 Usually
4 Always

25. When I left the hospital, I clearly understood the purpose for taking each of my medications.

1 Strongly disagree
2 Disagree
3 Agree
4 Strongly agree
5 I was not given any medication when I left the hospital

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RESULTS

Providing patients with medication education in a format that is easily read offers rapid and complete teaching

Rapid review of medications at discharge increases patient satisfaction with the discharge process

Study is ongoing, as process has not yet been implemented throughout hospital

Anticipated increase in patient satisfaction scores in the categories of Nurse Communication, Communication about Medicines, and Care Transition

BACKGROUND

Current medication education given to patients ranges from 4 to 20 pages or more, depending on the number of prescriptions given at discharge

Education given at discharge is often rushed *at patient request*

Recent HCAHPS scores show 63% of patients reported that staff “always” explained about medications prior to administration. Alabama average score is 66%, national average is 65% (www.medicare.gov/hospitalcompare)

Questions selected from the most recent HCAHPS survey relate to nurse communication (question 3), communication about medicines (questions 16 and 17) and care transition from hospital to home (question 25)

METHODS

Compile a list of most frequent discharge medications prescribed to patients with review and support from hospitalist physicians and nurse practitioners

Utilize current discharge medication education information to ensure that handout is accurate but succinct

Discharge medication education needs assessment designed and presented to nurses in ED Observation unit

Booklet design is simple, easy to read, and a single page

Approved handout will be provided to ED Observation unit and distributed to patients on discharge. Further study will determine if this material will be implemented hospital wide

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Research methods included both qualitative and quantitative, and the project incorporated both input and feedback from hospitalist physicians, hospitalist nurse practitioners, frontline nursing staff, and administration.

Patient education is an important component of patient care, and one that should neither be treated lightly nor overlooked.

Improved patient education increases not only patient satisfaction, but also expands staff engagement.



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