Making a Checklist and Checking it Twice: Implementing a Strategy to Meet Stroke Center Monitoring Guidelines.

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Published In/Presented At
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ABSTRACT
The sudden, devastating injury of ischemic stroke requires emergent decision making to administer recombinant tissue plasminogen activator (rtPA). Once the decision is made, the clock for clinical nurses accelerates. Vital signs and neurological status are monitored at scheduled intervals. Staff within the LVHN neuroscience intensive care unit (NSICU) implemented a process which includes a checklist for mapping out the times of monitoring parameters. Leadership team members review in real time as a second pair of eyes, verifying documentation compliance. Clinical nurses care for the complex stroke patient confident that charting is audited for completeness. Compared to pre-implementation of the check-list and double checks, post-implementation compliance with the American Stroke Association guidelines for patient monitoring was improved. This poster reviews the guidelines for caring and monitoring ischemic stroke patients and details a care strategy which achieves both the patient’s needs and regulatory requirements.

METHODS
American Stroke Association Recommendations for Monitoring Patients Who Have Received rtPA
• Get with the Guidelines (GWTG) Stroke
  - Includes patient management and data collection tool
• Specialized Stroke Units
  - Recommended initial and ongoing stroke-specific education requirements for clinical staff
• Standard Order Sets
  - Outline vital sign and neurological exam monitoring
    - Identifies target heart rate & blood pressure
• Patient Monitoring Parameters
  - Hemodynamic vital signs monitored and documented
    - q 15 minutes during infusion, then
      - q 15 minutes x 1 hour after infusion, then
        - q 30 minutes x 6 hours, then
          - q hour x 16 hours
  - Neurological examination monitored and documented
    - q 15 minutes during infusion, then
      - q 30 minutes x 6 hours, then
        - q hour x 16 hours
  - Perihapical Vascular Assessment
    - q 15 minutes x 1 hour, then
      - q 30 minutes x 2 hours
      - q 60 minutes x 5 hours

CONCLUSIONS
• Checklist eases complex timing of assessments.
• Checklist increased staff accountability for documentation.
• Real-time monitoring and data transparency improves documentation compliance.

References:

Disclaimer Statement: There are no relevant conflicts of interests to disclose.