Improving Accuracy of Patient Weights

Patricia Combs RN
Lehigh Valley Health Network, Patricia.Combs@lvhn.org

Sarah J. Mccauley RN
Lehigh Valley Health Network, Sarah_J.Mccauley@lvhn.org

Deena A. Turek RN
Lehigh Valley Health Network, Deena_A.Turek@lvhn.org

Published In/Presented At

Combs, P. McCauley, S. Turek, D. (2019, March 28). *Improving Accuracy of Patient Weights.* Poster presented at: LVHN Vizient/AACN Nurse Residency Program Graduation, Lehigh Valley Health Network, Allentown, PA.

Improving Accuracy of Patient Weights

Patricia Combs, RN; Sarah McCauley, RN; Deena Turek, RN

Lehigh Valley Health Network, Allentown, Pennsylvania

Background

- Patient weights on the med/surg floors vary greatly from day to day due to inconsistencies in the process of obtaining the patients' weights.
- Lack of standardization with how staff performs daily weights and how they are documented.
- There is no policy/procedure in policy tech for obtaining patient weights.

PICO

Would standard work and a policy for obtaining patient weights decrease variations in patients' daily weights?

P-Patients who are ordered daily weights,

I-standard work flow for obtaining patient weights,

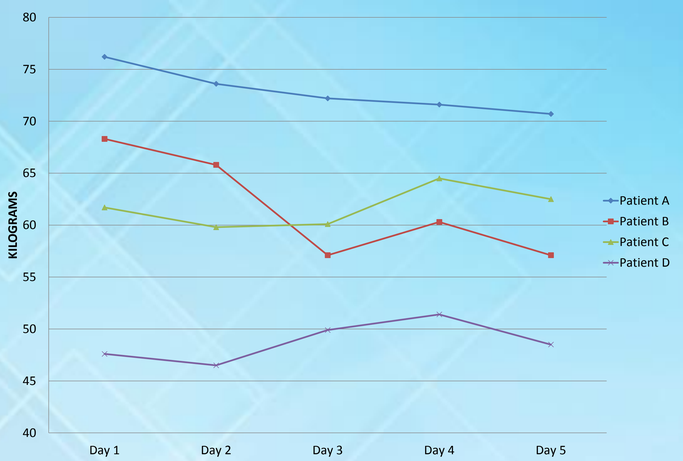
C-current practice,

O-decrease daily weight fluctuations.

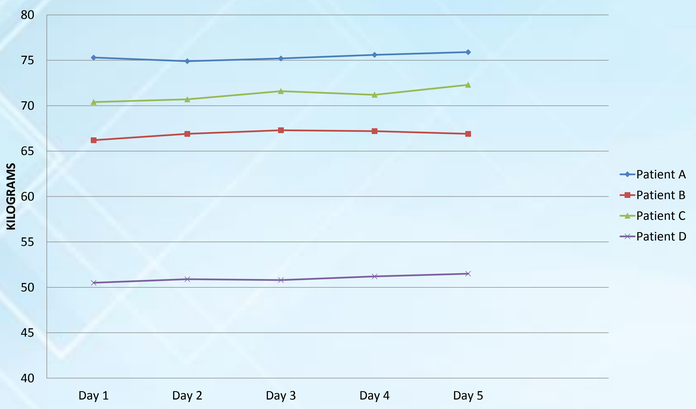
Evidence

- "Patient weight needs to be recorded and monitored during hospitalization for accurate drug dosing, assessment of response to therapy, and as an indicator of organ function." (Charani, 2015)
- "Inconsistencies in recording patient body weight, as well as using inaccurate or inappropriate weighing equipment, can have a negative impact on patient care, it can increase the risk of errors in diagnosis, interventions, treatment or medication dosage." (Evans, 2014)
- "Hospitals and patients would benefit from enhancing compliance with the systematic weighing of patients, staff training, and removing barriers to performing this task." (Lynga, 2012)
- "Patient weighing, can contribute to serious and life-threatening medication errors if a patient's weight is obtained, recorded, or communicated incorrectly." (Flenti, 2018)

Daily Weight Variations: No Standard



Daily Weight Variations: With Standard



Methods

- Survey RNs and TPs on med/surg units on their current practice of obtaining and communicating daily weights.
- Supply the RNs and TPs with a checklist to verify what equipment was used and what the patient was wearing or had on the bed.
- Performed 8 chart audits (4 pre and 4 post) to assess if standard work was effective.
- Standard equipment using bed scale:1 pillow, 1 fitted sheet, 1 dry flow pad, 1 flat sheet, gown, socks, SCD machine (if ordered).

Conclusion

- Evidence shows that implementing a standardized method of weight assessment would improve the accuracy of patients' weights.
- Development of a policy/procedure for obtaining patient weights would improve accuracy of patients' weights.
- Establishment of a routine way of charting daily weights and how they were obtained for charting in the electronic health would decrease fluctuations or variance in weight.

REFERENCES

Charani, E., Gharbi, M., Hickson, M., Othman, S., Alfituri, A., Frost, G. & Holmes, A. (2015). Lack of weight recording in patients being administered narrow therapeutic index antibiotics: a prospective cross-sectional study. *BMJ Open*, *5*(4), e006092.

Evans, L., & Best, C. (2014). Accurate assessment of patient weight. *Nursing Times*, *110*(12), 12–14.

Flentje, K. M., Knight, C. L., Stromfeldt, I., Chakrabarti, A., & Friedman, N. D. (2018). Recording patient bodyweight in hospitals: are we doing well enough? *Internal Medicine Journal*, *48*(2), 124–128.

Goldberg, L.R., Piette, J.D., Walsh, M.N., Frank, T.A., Jaski, B.E., Smith, A.L., Rodriguez, R., Mancini, D.M., Hopton, L.A., Orav, E.J., & Loh, E. (2003). Randomized trial of a daily electronic home monitoring system in patients with advanced heart failure: the weight monitoring in heart failure (WHARF) trial. *American Heart Journal*, 146 4, 705-12.

Lyngå, P., Persson, H., Hägg-Martinell, A., Hägglund, E., Hagerman, I., Langius-Eklöf, A., Rosenqvist, M. (2012). Weight monitoring in patients with severe heart failure (WISH). A randomized controlled trial. *European Journal Of Heart Failure*, 14(4), 438-444.