Don't Ask Alice -- Medication Reconciliation: A New Role to Decrease Discrepancies

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Abstract

Approximately 54% of inpatients have at least one discrepancy in the medications they report taking at home compared to those reported at time of admission. Twenty-seven percent of prescribing errors in hospitals are caused by incomplete medication records at the time of admission. These statistics prompted key stakeholders to evaluate current medication reconciliation processes.

Background/Current State

- 47.5% of inpatient medication reconciliations had at least one error.
- Multistep process with no identified “owner” or location to document.
- Practitioners working in silos resulting in duplicated work.
- Tremendous amount of time spent to reconcile medication lists.

Common thread in literature: Employ individuals who specialized in their function.

A rapid improvement event with key stakeholders including physicians, nurses and pharmacists determined a single healthcare resource as the best means to improve our process accuracy.

Medication Reconciliation Technician (MRT) - a certified pharmacy technician, with specialized training in patient interviewing and primary source medication list verification.

MRT Standard Work

1. Enter Best Possible Medication History (BPMH) into Home Medication Management system.
2. Print validated medication history for providers to use during admission process.
3. Document the reconciliation of the medication list.

Evaluation of Effectiveness

Med. Rec. Unintended Discrepancies by Month for LVH-CC

Other Metrics Identified

- Medication reconciliation order usage
- MRT process completion (ordering physician to floor metric)
- Physician medical record time (how long a physician spent on medication reconciliation)
- Length of stay (med. rec. vs. non-med. rec. patient)
- Readmission rate (med. rec. vs. non-med. rec. patient)

Feedback

Physicians: “I like the completeness.”
- Need MRT coverage at night
- Trigger the process even earlier

Nurses: “This is how it should be done!”
- Eliminates 2:00 am calls to doctors to verify medication orders
- “The right discipline is doing the right job.”

Case Manager: “Best thing we could do for patients is get it right from the beginning.”
- Helps with insurance plans that restrict the number of medications covered

References: