Clinical Pathways: Building for the Real World

Quality Forum
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• https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aS3xaXsh6vo

Understand the definitions of clinical pathways and standards of care.
Understand how to build a care path based on best practice, industry standards and what you are capable of doing in your facility.
• Understand how clinical pathways and standards of practice affect patient outcomes through EHR and reporting to Quality Assurance and Performance Improvement Committee as a Performance Improvement Project

Definition of Clinical Pathways

• Clinical Pathways
  • Also known as care pathways, critical pathways, care maps
  • Manage quality in health care concerning the standardization of care processes
  • Promote organized and efficient patient care based on evidenced based practice
  • Optimize outcomes

Other definitions

• Workflows
  • An orchestrated and repeatable pattern of business activity
  • It can be complex or simple and involve one or steps and process
• Policy
- A deliberate system of principles to guide decisions and achieve rational outcomes
- Policies consist of a purpose statement, applicability and scope, effective date, responsibilities, policy statement. It may also include definitions
• Procedure
- Document written to support a policy
- Describes Who, When, What, Where and How

Evidenced Based Practice

• Evidence-based practice (EBP) is a problem-solving approach to the delivery of health care that integrates the best evidence from studies and patient care data with clinician expertise and patient preferences and values. (Fineout-Overholt E, 2010)¹

The five key steps in the evidence-based practice process include:
1. Formulation of a clinical question;
2. Gathering the best evidence to answer the clinical question;
3. Critical appraisal of the best evidence;
4. Integration of the evidence with the clinician's own expertise, assessment of the patient's condition, available healthcare resources, and the patient's preferences and values to implement a clinical decision.

5. Evaluation of the practice change as a result of implementing the evidence²

Building a Clinical Pathway

• Clinical question
  – How do we prevent rehospitalizations related to COPD/CHF/Pneumonia?

• Gathering the best evidence
  – We used different resources including INTERACT, scholarly research and input from professionals such as our medical director
• Critical Appraisal of the research
  – How to put it all together? What format do we use? Will it be a process the team can actually use? Looking at the practice in an interdisciplinary fashion.

• Integration or building the clinical pathway
  – Standards of care
  – Clinical pathway
  – Other tools we use such as SBAR, Stop and Watch, Red/Yellow/Green
  – Champion of the program
  – Education of team members

• Evaluation
  – The often forgotten step of any process
  – How is it working? Do we need more education? Where can we improve on our process
• Sample Clinical Pathway
  – We choose to use Visio
  – Interactive for all to use from desktop or folder
  – Review a sample clinical pathway

References