

Identification of Discharge before Noon Barriers and Development of a Targeted Initiative in an Inpatient Teaching Service

Introduction

Late patient discharges result in admission bottlenecks, increased length of stays, and reduced patient and staff satisfaction. While current literature acknowledges that the educational schedule of trainees can interfere with timely discharges, most targeted interventions are designed to improve discharge processes flow rather than discharge order submission times. This particular intervention was implemented to specifically target the discharge order time in our teaching program.

Methods

Design

Residents (n=58/145) and nurses (n=22/52) completed a brief pre-intervention questionnaire on possible barriers to and suggested improvements for achieving an early discharge order time. Additionally, three interviews were completed with the case manager and two clinical managers together from each ward.

Setting

Three inpatient medical wards of an academic primary care teaching service

Intervention

Early discharge barriers include poor identification of discharge candidates and lack of communication between physicians, with other providers, and with patients. The intervention to be executed implements planning the evening prior of 1-2 patients to be discharged, early rounding on these patients, and improved communication between all stakeholders.

Measurements

Quantitative and qualitative results from Qualtrics surveys

Results

Following data collection and analysis, findings show that preparing for early discharge candidates in the evening prior and strengthened communication would significantly improve the discharge order time. Moreover, 90% of residents' responses suggested an early rounding style.

Discussion

Findings suggest late discharge order times were due to other tasks occupying time before noon. Earlier discharge order times correlate with earlier admissions, decreased length of stays, increased satisfaction, and ultimately, increased efficiency. Similar interventions may be used for other training programs.