Up to 70% of Patients Have Errors on Their Medication Lists

Leveraging pharmacy staff prevents harm and increases clinician time for patient care functions

Problem

- 20% of admissions are medication-related
- High risk patients have 8 errors on admission medication lists.
- Only 5.3% of patients 65 year or older on ≥5 medications have accurate lists
- One third of inpatient orders have errors and 85% originate from the medication history
- Up to 59% of errors can cause harm
- Up to 80% of patients have at least 1 medication error at discharge

Solution

On admission, studies demonstrate increased accuracy of medication lists obtained by pharmacy staff vs usual care

- Accuracy rates: Nurses, 20%; Hospitalists, 50%; Technicians, 100%
- Nurses 14% vs pharmacy technicians 94% (p<0.0001)

At discharge, pharmacists identified errors in medication lists in 49% of patients and problems in an additional 16% vs usual care

Business Case

Cost of Harm

- Cost of adverse drug event (ADE): $2,262- $5,790
- Increased length of stay due to ADE: 3.1 days
- Cost/readmission ~ $12,300-13,800

Benefits

- 75% reduction in ADEs
- 41 minutes of nursing time saved/patient
- Cost-effective to utilize technicians for medication histories; $830,000
- Patients have an accurate medication list upon discharge
- Reduced readmissions
- Enables clinicians to practice at the highest level of their license and training

Recommendation: For high risk patients, pharmacy will ensure the accuracy of the medication list at admission and discharge
References


