Leveraging GetWellNetwork to Address Pediatric Pain

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Introduction

Pain is a commonly misunderstood and frequently under treated or untreated symptom in acutely ill children. As “the fifth vital sign”, pain assessment, control and treatment is one of the most challenging functions of healthcare providers serving children. Adding to this challenge is the personal experience of pain, the creative description of pain in children, and the age and developmental level of the patient. Children vary widely in their perception and tolerance of pain. Finally, often times families do not understand how to recognize pain, how to treat their child’s pain nor what to expect in terms of pain management. Recognizing these challenges, we created and implemented a pain initiative that leverages the GetWellNetwork, our interactive patient care system, to engage patients and caregivers in pain management during inpatient hospitalizations. This quality improvement project is an innovative approach to obtain real time recognition and response to pain related concerns during the patient’s admission. The goal of this quality improvement project is to improve the patient’s pain management and overall experience at our hospital.

Objectives

1. Maximize the use of our interactive patient care system, GetWellNetwork, as our main tool to reach and educate families
2. Identify the patient’s/families concerns regarding pain management as early as possible through the use of a daily, automated survey on GetWellNetwork
3. Improve inpatient experience, satisfaction, and perception of pain management

Process

GetWellNetwork is an interactive patient care system that provides health related educational materials and entertainment to the patient and caregiver throughout their hospital care journey. Personalized patient experience, condition-specific education and countless entertainment options make patients and families feel like GetWellTown was created just for them. Capitalizing on this technology, All Children’s Pain Management Committee developed a two prong approach to improve pain management. First, every child/guardian admitted to the hospital is required to watch the educational video “Your Child’s Pain: How to Help.” The video is prompted for the patient to view immediately upon admission. The goal of the educational video is to provide information about general pain management, how to recognize pain and how parents can help their child. Second, a daily pulse survey is sent out through the GetWellNetwork to assess overall pain management. At 10:59 am every morning, a screen displays to every patient with the opportunity for them to answer the question “Has your or your child’s pain been controlled during your stay?” (see figure 1). If the patient responds, “pain was managed poorly,” an email is generated to the manager and a printout is produced at the unit printer with the patient’s name and room number. The printout is provided to the bedside nurse to immediately follow up with the patient. The bedside nurse is empowered to determine and address the pain management dissatisfaction. For those patients who responded pain managed poorly, 90 minutes later the patients receive a follow-up question, asking if someone addressed their concerns. (see figure 2) If they indicate “no,” an email is sent to the clinical manager for additional follow-up regarding the families concerns. By making it easy for children and parents to get stay informed in the care process and receive relevant education, regarding pain assessment and management, GetWellNetwork at All Children’s helps providers keep patients involved and hopefully achieve better outcomes.

Analysis and Outcomes

Question 1: Daily prompt at 10:59 am

Who answered “Pain Managed Poorly”? Yes, 4314, 48%. No, 9, 1%.

Has your or your child’s pain been controlled during your stay? Yes, 1023, 12%. No, 6, 0.7%.

Not having pain? Yes, 754, 8.1%.

Has your or your child’s pain been controlled during your stay? Yes, 206, 24%. No, 4, 0.5%.

Did someone follow up with you about your poorly managed pain? Yes, thanks, 33.

Question 2: Patient ONLY receives if answered “pain was managed poorly” on initial question.

Benefits and Implications for Nursing Practice

Leverages technology to supplement the regularly scheduled pain assessment, intervention, and re-assessment cycle. Demonstrates benefit of supplemental technology in assisting nurses and providers with real-time, self-assessment of pain and opportunity for intervention.

Allows for tracking and trending of pain management concerns and issues locally and within the organization as a whole. Promotes patient and family centered care by improving the understanding of pediatric pain management in the acute care setting.

Positively impacts patient satisfaction and experience scores regarding overall pain management during hospitalization.

Next Steps

Analyze overall trends in patient’s perception of pain management during hospitalization to optimize care at All Children’s Hospital.

Utilize outcomes to determine additional resources needed to employ the use of non-pharmacologic interventions for children with acute and chronic pain.

Consider use of this intervention in ambulatory setting such as the emergency center, outpatient clinics and perioperative services.