

Quality Improvement Project to Improve Gp Satisfaction with Information Provided on Palliative Discharge Letters Following Hospital Admission

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Abstract:

Background: This project was undertaken on a medical ward involving both the medical and palliative care teams.

It was in response to a survey completed in which only 53% of Belfast Trust General Practitioners (GP) reported satisfaction with the information provided in hospital discharge letters regarding palliative patients. This can have a significant impact on patient care in areas such as symptom management, ceilings of treatment and preferred place of death and is very relevant for the older population and their families as many of these patients would prefer to avoid a further hospital admission. Our aim was to improve GP satisfaction with the information provided in hospital discharge letters for palliative patients by 10%. Methods Following the baseline survey results, a hospital palliative discharge template was developed. This involved patients with complex palliative needs and/or for end of life care. Additionally, the patient's GP was given a verbal handover prior to discharge in order to avoid delays in information. Following the first round of discharges the ward team provided feedback on the current template, including ease of use and suggestions for necessary amendments needed and the template was amended based on these results.

Results: The third cycle of this project is still in progress. This involves surveying the GP's who received the new template to find out if the information provided was satisfactory for them to provide good, patient centred care. Results will be compared to the baseline survey and results reviewed.

Conclusions: This project has highlighted the importance of patient centred palliative care, ensuring that the patient's care needs and wishes are known. If final results from the third cycle show an improvement in GP satisfaction, our team will provide education to the wider hospital team and aim to implement the use of this template as standard practice.