

Prescribing compliance with anti-emetics and pain management with routes of administration

Background

- * The correct management and administration of medications by healthcare professionals is vital to help reduce drug errors and patient harm.¹
- * Administering medicines correctly includes ensuring the correct route is chosen; this is highlighted in the Trust's medicines use policy.²
- * Literature investigating the compliance of healthcare professionals with administering medicines via the prescribed route is limited, and current practices of prescribing and administering medicines within the Trust need to be investigated.

Aim

To evaluate the current practice of prescribing and administering intravenous (IV) and oral paracetamol, cyclizine and ondansetron to patients at NuTH.

Method

This audit involved two methods of data collection:

1. Prescription analysis

- Patients admitted onto two surgical wards at NuTH over a defined two-week period were identified using eRecord.
- The number of oral and IV paracetamol, cyclizine and ondansetron prescriptions were counted for each patient, and the number of discrepancies between the route prescribed and the route the medication was administered by were recorded on an Excel spreadsheet.

2. Surveys

- Two multiple-choice surveys were created on SurveyPlanet and distributed to doctors and nurses working on the two surgical wards.
- The survey aimed at doctors included 3 scenarios surrounding prescribing issues, and doctors were required to give the single best answer from a range of choices.
- The survey created for nurses required the respondents to give the most appropriate action from a range of choices to 3 scenarios surrounding route of administration issues

References

1. Royal College of Nursing. Medicines management [Internet]. London;RCN; 2020 [cited 2021 March 1]. 12 p. Available from: <https://www.rcn.org.uk/-/media/royal-college-of-nursing/documents/publications/2020/january/009-018.pdf?la=en>
2. The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (2020) Medicines Use Policy

Results

Prescription analysis

- The number of instances in which paracetamol, ondansetron and cyclizine were given to patients were 1255, 132 and 132 respectively. 27 paracetamol doses (2.15%) and 3 cyclizine doses (2.27%) were not administered via the prescribed route. All ondansetron doses were administered as prescribed.

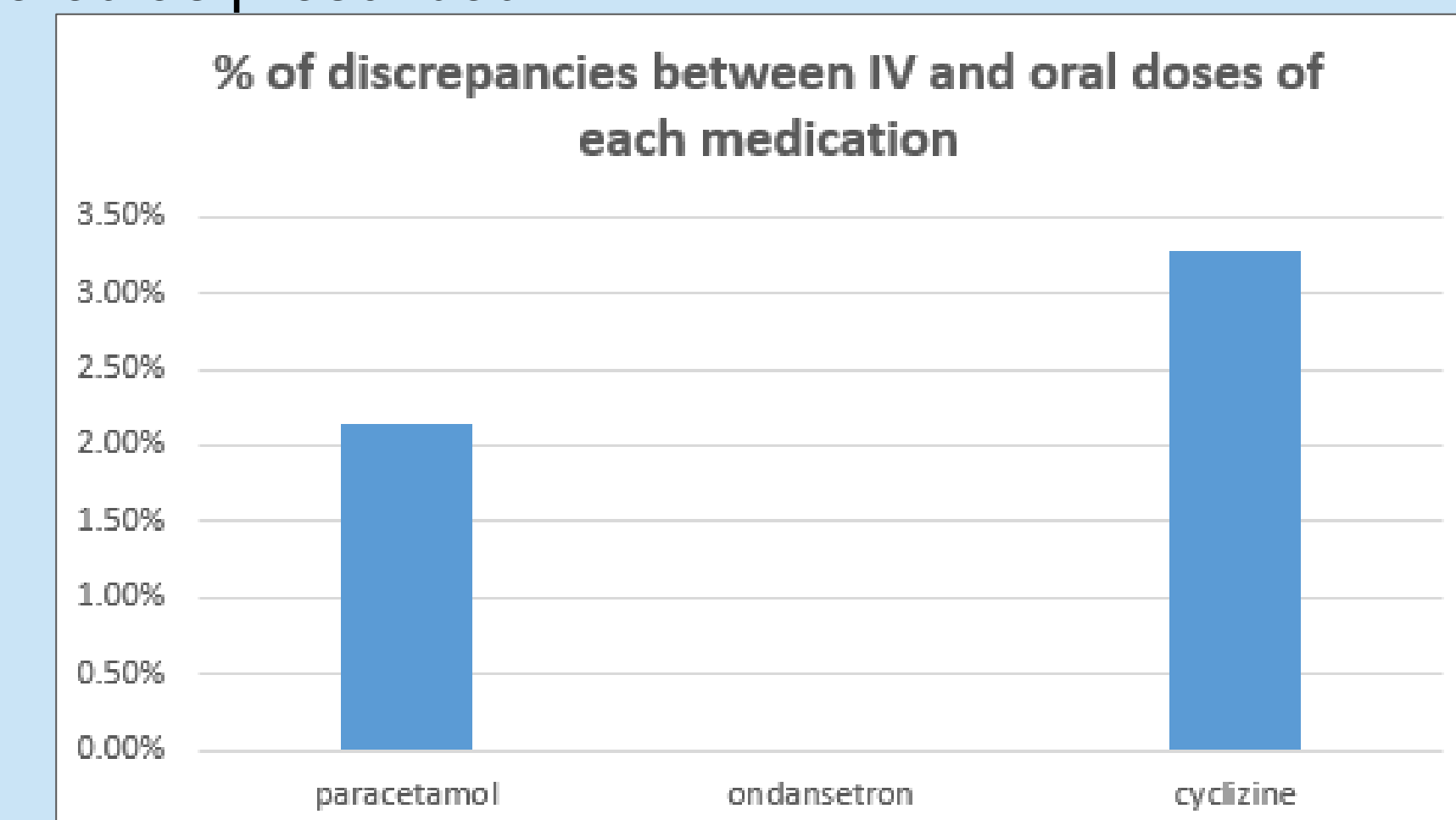


Figure 2. Bar chart showing the % of discrepancies found between IV and oral doses of paracetamol, ondansetron and cyclizine respectively.

Survey results

- 6 doctors and 24 nurses responded to the survey.
- 100% of doctors were aware of the appropriate response to situations requiring a change of route on the prescription prior to administration.
- 20.8% of nurses considered it appropriate to administer IV prescribed paracetamol, ondansetron and cyclizine orally without a change in prescription.

Conclusion

- Doctors were aware of the necessary measures to take to ensure pain medications and anti-emetics were prescribed appropriately.
- However, some nurses were unclear of the importance of administering medication via the prescribed route

Future Work

- Introducing teaching sessions and educating nurses to reinforce the importance of routes of drug administration
- A re-audit to determine if compliance to the Trust medicines policy has improved