

The impact of the use of patient information booklets for commonly used post-operative medicines on nurse-led discharges from elective wards.

Background

At Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH) in Gateshead elective surgery wards experience a high patient turnaround which prevents members of the pharmacy team from counselling patients on their discharge medicines. Instead, nurse-led discharges are common. Currently, there is no standardised script or structure to follow to ensure all patients receive the same level of information. The pharmacy department produced a booklet containing summaries of commonly used post-operative medicines to facilitate the delivery of good quality medicines information.

Methodology

The primary researcher produced semi-structured interview questions for patients discharged before the use of the booklet and similar interview questions for patients discharged with the booklet.

The questions were comparable to ease date analysis. 37 patients were contacted via telephone during first data collection cycle out of which 24 participated in the project

54 patients were contacted via telephone during second data collection cycle out of which 26 participated in the project. A T-test was carried and qualitative data was analysed using NVivo

Results

1 33% of all patients had questions about their medicines after leaving the hospital but in the pre-booklet population 58% reported that they were not given any useful medicines information sources.

In the post-booklet population, 3 patients found the booklet useful in answering their question. 4 patients did not find the booklet useful in answering their questions.

3 10 patients either did not look at the booklet or could not remember getting the booklet.

54% of patients found the booklets easy to navigate, 50% of patients found that the information (how to use, side effects, warnings) was clear and 75% of patients who had used the booklet were satisfied with the level of information received.

Quotes

"...whoever wants to read up can just read patient information leaflets. Most people will not even bother looking." – P.R.

"Was the booklet easy to navigate?"
Yes because the page numbers were all there. – K.C.

"Was the booklet easy to use?"
Yes, very easy to use and understand and the discharge nurse explained where exactly to look for what. – A.S.

Discussion

The results do not indicate a statistically significant change in impact when using the booklet for nurse-led discharges. Patients explained that they do not draw distinct differences between the booklets and the other leaflets and sheets they receive. Positive impact was made when the nurses directed the patients to the booklet and explained their use. The small sample size and data collection window were limitations. Further interventions include detailed training sessions on how to use booklets during discharge.

References

Picton C, Wright H. Keeping patients safe when they transfer between care settings. The Pharmaceutical Journal [Internet]. 2012 [cited 30 November 2020];. Available from: <https://www.rpharms.com/Portals/0/RPS%20document%20library/Open%20access/Publications/Keeping%20patients%20safe%20transfer%20of%20care%20report.pdf>

Figure 1. Front page of the booklet

Antibiotics

Antibiotics are used to treat and prevent infections. Your doctor will tell you if you have developed an infection while you have been in hospital.

It is important to complete the course of antibiotics you have been prescribed, even if you feel well. This is to make sure all of the infection has been treated so it cannot come back once you have stopped your antibiotics.

Flucloxacillin

It is best to take Flucloxacillin on an empty stomach- that means 30minutes before food or 2 hours after food.

Flucloxacillin is a Penicillin antibiotic. You must NOT take this if you have an allergy to Penicillin or other Penicillin-containing antibiotics. Flucloxacillin is used to treat infections of the skin and soft tissue, but can be used in other infections.

You may experience some indigestion, diarrhoea or sickness with Flucloxacillin - this is normal and should pass once the course is complete. If this becomes problematic, please do speak to your doctor.

Figure 2. Excerpt from booklet