

Quality and Content of Discharge Summaries on the Paediatric Ward - Audit

Dr Ugochinyere Ahiazunwa Uguru (1); Dr James Houston (2)

1. Junior trust doctor Paediatrics; 2. Consultant Paediatrician Calderdale and Huddersfield NHS Foundation Trust

Objectives

Effective discharge summaries are crucial handover documents for GPs, providing a concise overview of a patient's hospitalization. Variations were observed in the overall quality of discharge summaries completed on the paediatric wards, not compliant with the Professional Records Standard Body's eDischarge summary guidance endorsed by the RCPCH¹. This audit aimed to enhance the quality and content of discharge summaries completed on the Paediatric ward, with a targeted 40% improvement to bring a positive shift in practice and foster an improved continuity of patient care.

Method

We did a 5-month retrospective study (13 Feb 2023 - 28 Jul 2023) of 105 discharge summaries selected from doctors daily jobs list. 35 discharge summaries were assessed against 9 standard criteria for each plan-do-study-act (PDSA) cycle over each 10-days period. We publicized a "How-to & Why" guide on the wards, WhatsApp groups, and among colleagues before the 2nd PDSA cycle. Third PDSA cycle was repeated after 5 months without further intervention and results were compared and presented.

Result

First PDSA cycle showed a 14.2% compliance of discharge summaries to standards, 88.5% safety net advice and 60% medical jargons use.

Second cycle after 3 weeks resulted in total compliance of 42.8% which exceeded our target, and use of medical jargons was 23%.

The final re-audit after 5 months revealed a significant 71.4% overall improvement, with 8% medical jargon use. Safety net advice was consistently well documented.

Conclusion

This improvement in the quality of discharge summaries reflects a noteworthy positive change in practice, benefiting the GPs, paediatric patients, and their families, while also upholding the legal importance of these documents. Ensuring regular training on documentation standards is therefore imperative in sustaining quality. The inclusion of safety net advice in discharge summaries enhances patient safety.

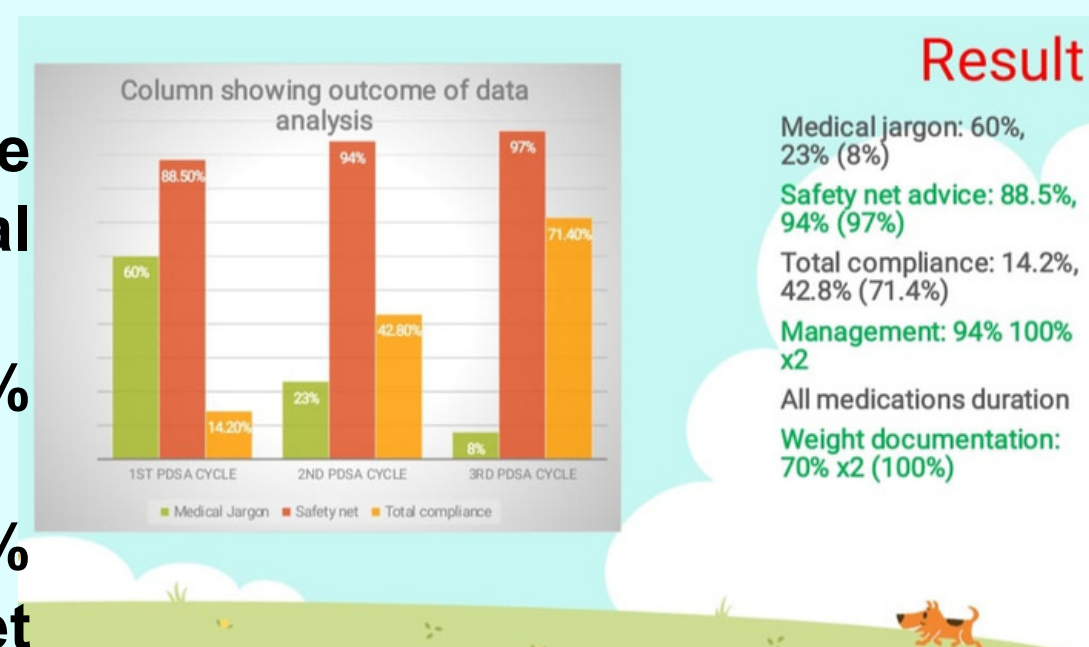
In response to our local presentation of this audit, the department has committed to integrating thorough documentation of discharge summaries into the orientation program for new doctors, utilizing our audit as a pivotal reference point.

Reference

- <https://theprsb.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/eDischarge-Summary-Maintenance-Release-Implementation-Guidance-Report-v2.1-23.1.19.pdf> Google Scholar

Keypoints

- Effective discharge summaries are crucial for improved continuity of care & patient safety.
- Thorough documentation of discharge summaries should be taught to junior doctors.
- Maintaining change in practice takes time and is a collective effort.



Acknowledgement

Paediatric junior doctors and nurses.

Abbreviations:

RCPCH - Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health

