Improving the Quality of Discharge Summaries on the Stroke Unit

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Introduction

“Good clinical practice is increasingly dependent upon good quality health records. These are needed to: • Facilitate continuity of care within and between multi-professional and multi-site teams • Support care professionals in leveraging the best available evidence at point of care decisions • Help care professionals to monitor for critical events and trends • Avoid clinical incidents and errors”

OPPORTUNITIES PROVIDED:
- Improving the quality of discharge summaries by developing a department-specific electronic discharge summary (EDS) & bringing them in line with RCP standards

CHALLENGES POSED:
- Technically challenging & difficult for staff to adapt
- Inception of a bare, generic electronic discharge summary (EDS) template

Methods

• Following the introduction of eHospital at Addenbrooke’s Hospital, we assessed the quality of EDS for ischaemic strokes, using standards derived from: the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges, the British Association of Stroke Physicians Stroke Service Standards 2014, and the Royal College of Physicians National Clinical Guideline for Stroke 2012. We developed a new Stroke-specific EDS and re-assessed the quality.

  3 audit cycles: in each cycle, we performed a retrospective review of 40 consecutive EDS, after improvements.

Results

Figure 1: Aims

Figure 2: Feedback from primary & secondary care colleagues on the new Stroke-specific EDS compared to the old generic EDS format being used by other departments in the hospital

Figure 3: Summary of data collected on the quality of the Stroke-specific EDS (cycles 2 and 3) compared to the generic EDS (cycle 1)

Outcome

• Audit resulted in a continued and sustained improvement in the quality of department-specific EDS. This approach could be used by other hospitals, as more become paperless.

  • The ability to quickly access key information about a patient’s admission at follow-up has the potential to improve efficiency in clinic. This demonstrates how technology can be utilised to improve communication between hospitals & primary care.