Clinical Pharmacy Services in the Emergency Department

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Objectives

- Explain the benefits of designing/implementing an EM Pharmacist program
- Describe a model program
History of Emergency Pharmacy Services

- 1970’s
- Billing
- Inventory control
- Clinical pharmacy services
- 1980’s led way for pharmaceutical care

1 Ellenbaas, et al.
ED is a Unique Practice

- Many safety mechanisms not available in ED
- Pharmacy USUALLY not present
  - NO DOUBLE CHECK
- JCAHO supports pharmacist double check on ALL medication orders
Unique Practice cont.

- High Patient Volume
- Verbal Orders
- HIGH STRESS situations
Reasons for Chaos

- One time orders
- Little patient history
- No other safety mechanism in place
- Changing gears
- Inpatients/outpatients co-mingling
- 4 times as many ED visits as OR in US!
Medication Errors in the ED

- ED has highest rate of preventable errors
- 114 MILLION ED patients yearly in US*
- 5% experience potential events
  - 70% of these are PREVENTABLE

*National Center for Health Statistics.
The Medication Process

- Prescribing
- Transcribing
- Dispensing
- Administering
- Monitoring
- Discharge
Prescribing

- Incomplete knowledge of medication
- Incomplete knowledge of patient
- Less access to
  - Patient medications prior to visit
  - Patient history
Transcribing

- Verbal Orders
- Poor penmanship
- Team communication errors
Dispensing

- Dispensed by nursing
- Dispensed by physicians
- Thorough counseling not available/performed/considered
Administration of Medications

- Multiplicity of medications
  - Therapeutic duplications
- Potency of medications
- Multiple patients in the ED
- Parenteral administration
- Drug incompatibilities
- Physician administration
Monitoring

- Parenteral administration
  - Esp cardiac medications, insulin, etc…
- Emergency procedures
- Inadequate personnel
IOM Report

Hospital-Based Emergency Care: At the Breaking Point

- Emergency Department (ED) crowding:
  - Over past decade, ED visits increased 26%.
  - The number of EDs declined 9% and hospitals closed 198,000 beds.

- Ambulance diversion: When crowding reaches dangerous levels, ERs divert inbound ambulances.
Uncompensated care: Everyone is legally entitled to emergency care, however no funding is provided. This results in the inevitable closing of many ERs and trauma centers.

Fewer "on-call" specialists: The rising costs of uncompensated care and fear of legal liability have led more specialists to opt out of taking ER call.

Inadequate emergency preparedness: If ERs and trauma centers are already jammed with patients, how could they respond to a disaster or a terrorist strike?
EDs not well equipped to manage pediatric care

- Pediatrics make up 27% of ED visits
- 6% of EDs prepared for pediatrics
Model EPh program
ED has > 120 beds
- Over 500 doses of medication dispensed per day
- Over 95,000 patient visits per year
  - 65,000 adults
  - 30,000 pediatrics
- Nationally ~ 3.5% of ED’s have Pharm presence
Model EPh program

100% Clinical

- Trauma and medical resuscitation
- Discharge patient assistance
- Teaching

- Minimal to NO dispensing
Clinical Duties

- Being involved in patient presentation
- Actively involved in bedside care of all critically ill (medical and surgical) patients
- Seeing patients and making recommendations
- Helping avoid ADEs + PADEs
Clinical Duties

- Clinical Consultation
  - Attend rounds and present patient information
  - Dose recommendations
  - Therapeutic substitution
  - Disease state specific pharmacotherapy
  - Pharmacokinetics

- Being available – and visible!!
Clinical Duties

- Medication history
- Allergy screening
- Pregnancy medication consultation
- Weight based dosing
  - Pediatric
  - Obese
  - Geriatric
  - Disease specific (CF, FTT, etc)
Clinical Duties

- **Patient Education**
  - Medication specific education
    - Asthma
    - Warfarin
    - LMWH
    - Diabetes
  - Discharge counseling
Challenges/Barriers to Implementation

- Financial
- Acceptance by medical team and administration
- Staffing
- Physical space within ED
- Training
### Financial Barrier

- Largest cost savings based on clinical interventions
- 2 Major interventions
  - Medication selection
  - Dose change

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Levy, DB. Hospital Pharmacy 1993
Administration Barrier

- “Show me the money”
  - Soft dollars don’t usually count
- Patient safety benefits
Medical Team Barrier

- Just play nice with everyone
- BE VISIBLE!!!
- Show them what you are worth
- Know which fight to pick
- Build a relationship with attendings is key
  - many teams rotate through
Solutions to Challenges

- Power of suggestion
  - Not overstepping boundaries
  - Enhancing patient care
Power of Communication

- Actively seek out medical team
- Offer assistance – CONTINUALLY
  - Don’t be pushy – try subtly
  - BE AVAILABLE
- Not my job – of course it is!
Staffing Barrier

- Unfortunately national shortage
- Trained RPhs esp in EM
- Size of hospital will make a difference
Physical Space Barrier

- Avoid the satellite
- Technology is wonderful!
- Don’t expect an office when we barely have room for the patients
Training Barrier

- EM is EVERYTHING!
  - ID
  - Geriatrics
  - Pediatrics
  - Medicine
  - Psychiatry
  - Surgery
  - Jerry Springer show
Know Nothing

- Know your references
- Know where to look up EVERYTHING
- If you don’t know, don’t fake it
- “Fantasy Physiology”
Conclusion

- The EDs across the country are begging for pharmacists – come in with a plan and they will welcome you with open arms!
Questions?

■ Thank You

■ For more information, please contact :
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