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Analyze a Current Health Care Problem or Issue

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Developing a Health Care Perspective

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Analysis of Medication Errors

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Analysis of Medication Errors

Medication errors have continuously increased at a higher rate, despite several pieces of research being done in the medication field. Therefore, medication errors are any errors in the prescribing, administering, or dispensing of a drug regardless of whether such errors result in adverse harm (Elden & Ismail, 2016). Even though medication error is a preventable problem, it continues to occur at an increasing rate and causing more damage to patients. Patient safety is one of the quality elements in the healthcare organization; thus, ensuring there are no medication errors is crucial in providing quality care to patients. This paper will evaluate medication error issues that occur to patients when seeking medication.

Elements of Medication Errors

According to Nanji et al. (2016), many patients have the risk of getting harmed when they go to the healthcare organization because of medication errors. Although several causes lead to medication errors, the majority of them can be prevented. Moreover, medication errors are caused by several other errors, such as administration errors, prescription errors, and dispensing errors. Furthermore, the lack of knowledge from health care professionals may also lead to increased medication errors. For that reason, the experience is crucial in providing medication to patients, as nurses and physicians are required to apply the knowledge, they learned in delivering the right medication to patients.

Administration errors are among the most significant errors that occur in health care institutions, and they do happen when an inconsistency occurs to the drug provided to the patient and the drug that was required by the prescriber. Administration errors comprise errors of omission, administration of expired or improper preparations, and inappropriate techniques. Additionally, prescription errors are when a patient is designated with the wrong drug. Some of

the errors that result in prescribing errors include lack of knowledge of the prescribed drug, use of abbreviations, unreadable handwriting, the mistake with the drug name, wrong history of taking medication and having little or no information about the recommended dosage for a drug (Cloete, 2015). Finally, dispensing errors arise during the process of dispensation. The errors may occur between the issuance of the receipt prescription to medicine provided to the patient. Moreover, this kind of error can happen at a rate of one to twenty-four percent and may involve the provision of the wrong medicine, especially to those drugs with similar names such as Lasix and Losec (Chumchit et al., 2015). Furthermore, other factors cause dispensation errors, and they comprise of wrong dosage, patient, and drug as well as the use of electronic labeling that has resulted in inversion and typing errors.

Analysis

Administration errors are viewed as the most significant errors in causing medication errors. Hence, as nurses, the leading professional goal they have is to provide and improve an individual's health. However, the increased rate of medication errors has resulted in a global problem as there is an increased mortality rate, cost, and prolonged hospital stay (World Health Organization, 2016). Therefore, as a pharmacist, they are required to have more knowledge about drugs and the names and abbreviations of drugs so that they can reduce the provision of wrong medication to patients. Although prescribers may use the relevant abbreviation of drugs when prescribing the medicine, the pharmacist needs extensive training to help them understand the type of dose required and formula for taking the drug. Similarly, the pharmacist is also expected to act ethically at work to avoid confusion with drugs, for instance, by keeping the right drug to own proper packaging and labels to prevent various medication errors.

The Context for Medication Errors

Technology has highly increased in the medicine field, making the processes in health care facilities more intricate. For that reason, to maintain safety and a more advanced medical system with fewer or no errors, it is essential for the health care professionals to always be updated with the current technology and be able to apply the knowledge learned and researched. Moreover, health care professionals are provided with an education that does not inform about the ethical destructions and interruptions that result in medication errors. Besides, the decrease in health care professionals' staff and inexperienced nurses in hospitals leads to them working for more hours and not having convenient sleep hours (Ancker et al., 2017). All these factors contribute to an increase in medication errors.

Population Affected by Medication Errors

Medication errors cause harm to patients as well as even death. However, although not all people report the harm they have encountered due to medication errors, some are affected profoundly due to the errors. The populations that are highly influenced by medication errors are the children and the elderly. Therefore, it is essential for healthcare professionals always to observe the age and body of the patient to ensure appropriate dosage. Moreover, patients with renal and liver failure are also affected as they still need lower doses to avoid harmfulness. For instance, in the United States, people who die for medication error ranges from 7000-9000 (Eckelman & Sherman, 2016). Besides, there are more than one hundred thousand individuals who experience adverse reactions and other medication complications but do not report. As a result, the total cost related to the treatment of medication errors in the United States has surpassed 40 billion dollars in a year (Choi et al., 2016).

Considering Options

With the increase in medication errors, it is crucial to create measures to reduce the errors and continue saving a life. Quality of healthcare is essential in saving people's lives as well as providing medical services with no errors. Hence, health care facilities must increase the nurses' staff to enable them to work at a convenient time, thus ensuring quality medication provision. Moreover, it is essential to reduce disruption and interruption when administering medication through the use of no disruption zones such as "Observe silence" sign to minimize medication errors (Hayes et al., 2015). Health care facilities also need to retain experienced nurses to help in the training and supervision of inexperienced nurses to minimize medication errors.

Solutions

With the increase in medication errors occurring at the administration phase, ¹² it is essential ¹² to provide education and training to ¹² the nurses. Nurses are required to start experiencing how to administer drugs while in nursing schools to become familiar with drug abbreviations and names of drugs. Similarly, it is essential to ensure healthcare professionals are ¹¹ keen when typing the prescriptions ¹¹ to reduce medication errors (Litman et al., 2018). Dosage and formula ¹¹ of taking drugs are also essential, and they can use the electronic system always to help professionals perform such activities.

Implementation

The occurrence of medication error occurs in three phases, with every phase having different but almost similar causes. Therefore, experience in health care professionals plays a critical part in reducing medication errors. Ensuring all nurses are experienced requires more time to make them understand what is expected of them and to grasp every ethical standard required of them. All healthcare professionals and pharmacists are needed to practice their skills

while in schools (Hayes et al., 2015). For instance, they should be provided with an imitation of how the medication should be administered. Having significant knowledge of how drugs should be prescribed and the formula and dosage to take and organizing the drugs will be an added advantage of reducing medication errors. Moreover, healthcare professionals should have a standard of writing medication; for instance, using the full names of drugs will also help reduce errors. Even though different health care professionals have varying degrees of prescriptive authority over medication, it is important for all professionals to have an understanding of the legal implications of prescribing medications. According to Patton & Lewallen (2015), health care professionals are at the forefront in ensuring that the patients are protected from medication errors, therefore their effort in avoiding mistakes is essential. Another ethical implication of training nurses while in school is the studying and understanding of the formula and the use of new drugs, where there will be need for health care professionals to have a responsibility of educating themselves regarding the new medication and other drugs in the market.

Conclusion

Medication errors have highly increased and are becoming a nightmare to the global health industry. The main elements of medication errors include administration errors, dispensing inaccuracies, and prescription errors. Administration errors are viewed as the most significant errors causing medication errors. Medication errors have caused increased mortality rate costs and prolonged time in hospitals. Consequently, healthcare professionals are expected to know how the medication should be administered by having more training starting medication administration while in school increases the experience of a health care professional before joining the real medical field. Similarly, health care professionals will be able to learn the right

abbreviations to use while prescribing medication to patients hence reducing misunderstanding among them.

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