Dialysis Treatment Set-Up: Color Codes and Checklists to Improve Patient Safety and Team Efficiency

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Background

- Many hospital systems, as well as regulatory agencies like the Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA), recognize that checklists and color codes can be valuable tools in the healthcare workplace.\(^1\)\(^2\)

  - Color coding provides a visual reminder system that can be used to convey information, alerting the user to a particular hazard or directing a specific course of action.

Objective

- To develop and test a system of checklists and color-coded labels that can be used in the acute dialysis setting to reduce the risk of human error and improve efficiency during the process of obtaining the necessary supplies for a dialysis treatment.

Approach

- Treatment set-up checklists were developed listing the supplies required for each dialysis modality; corresponding color-coded labels were added to inventory storage.

- Team members used the set-up checklist when pulling treatment supplies and were required to confirm that all required items had been retrieved before leaving the supply room or starting a dialysis treatment.

Results

- Use of color-coded inventory labels in conjunction with set-up checklists resulted in a decrease in supply errors.

  - During testing, supplies were complete the first time the team member left the supply room in 100% of bedside treatment set-ups assessed.

  - This resulted in an improvement in overall efficiency as team members saved up to 10 minutes with each avoided return visit to the supply room.

Conclusions

- This initiative demonstrated that the use of color-coded inventory labels in conjunction with treatment set-up checklists can reduce errors and improve efficiency during dialysis treatment set-up.

References


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