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Patient safety and risk management

PS-064 Chemotherapy administration safety in the outpatient oncology setting

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Abstract

Background Administration of antineoplastic agents is a complex process due to the potential risks for patients. The "five rights" should be accepted as a goal of the medication process: the right patient, the right drug, the right dose, the right route, and the right time.

Purpose To describe the process used to reduce safety-related errors by using portable data assistants (PDAs) and barcode scanners that ensure the five rights are completed. In addition, we aimed to know the degree of safety perceived by nurses and patients during administration procedures.

Material and methods The medication process begins with the review of clinical information and prescription, then it continues with the pharmaceutical review, drug preparation and drug dispensing. Once the information is introduced into an Oncofarm system, a unique barcode is assigned to identify each treatment with each patient and a bracelet is printed for the patients. Nurses read each barcode using their PDA where the information is displayed helping to prevent errors related with the five rights. Opinion survey questionnaires were handed out to 50 patients and 10 nurses to find out how they feel about drug safety.

Results Since the start of the use of a barcode system in November 2009 to July 2014 a total of 58,948 treatment regimens (91,159 drugs) have been administered to 4,560 patients. Regarding questionnaires, 95% of patients answered they felt totally safe when asked about the use of the barcode system. Among nurses, almost every aspect of the service provided was rated good or very good and 80% considered it a valuable tool to prevent medication errors. The increased perception of safety is considered the major advantage of the system.

Conclusion The development of the bar code system proved to be a valuable tool to improve patients' and nurses' perception of drug administration safety.

References and/or acknowledgements American Society of Clinical Oncology/Oncology Nursing Society Chemotherapy Administration Safety Standards.

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