Reducing Venous Thromboembolism Events: Quality Improvement

Madalyn Goble

Lakeview College of Nursing

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Professor Eleni Key

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The world of healthcare is ever changing with new ideas and new practices coming out every day. With new information continuously coming to light, it can be difficult to discern what will become the new best practice and what will simply remain a theory. This is where quality improvement comes into play. Quality improvement is "the systematic, data-based monitoring and evaluation of organizational processes with the end goal of continuous improvement" (Houser, 2023). In other words, quality improvement is when one or more people look at a set of data to try and figure out why an issue is occurring. They then take this data analysis and determine if there is a way the issue can be resolved. Using quality improvement, a set of data can be turned into a plan of action for improving overall quality of care.

Quality improvement is beneficial for health care members as they strive to provide the best care possible to their patients. However, before anyone can utilize quality improvement to its full capacity, they must understand its three main categories. The first of these categories is knowledge (QSEN.org, 2022). Anyone hoping to use quality improvement must be willing to learn new things. They also need to understand that any member of the healthcare team can have a positive, or negative, effect on patient outcomes. It is also important to understand that variability in a study can be a positive thing as it can show a range of results that may not be expected. The second category that must be comprehended is skills (QSEN.org, 2022). Any health care members participating in a quality improvement study must be willing and able to participate in the care related to the study. For example, if a study is covering hypertension, participants must be willing to take repeated blood pressure readings. Health care members must also be willing to recognize when their actions do not align with best practice. The third category covers attitude (QSEN.org, 2022). Having a proper attitude is not only important for quality

improvement research. It is also important for health care overall. Going into every day with the knowledge that everyone is important and can make a difference is crucial. It is important to learn to appreciate everyone that you work with, as a positive environment can help motivate others to be positive. Understanding these three categories can help improve quality improvement and healthcare as a whole.

Venous thromboembolism events (VTE) are a big issue in healthcare today. These events include both deep vein thromboembolisms (DVT) and pulmonary embolisms (PE). The number of patients that experience these events in the United States of America each year is on the rise. This is dangerous as these events can be fatal if not treated quickly and efficiently. In fact, nearly 900,000 Americans develop a DVT or PE each year and 100,000 of those cases will end in death (Barrett et al., 2024). The number of VTEs is climbing each year, and the number of deaths is increasing with it. VTEs can be prevented, but patients that refuse treatment put themselves at risk of becoming another fatality.

Article Summary

The article was published in the *Journal of Nursing Care Quality* in 2024. The article uses quantitative data to determine their results. This article has been peer-reviewed and can play an important role in bettering the nursing profession and patient care. Utilizing this article and the results of the study within, members of the health care team can try to prevent VTEs from occurring.

Introduction

The article begins by describing the prevalence of VTEs and hypothesizes why these events may be occurring. One common factor in many of the VTE cases the research group studied was patient refusal of anticoagulant medication. This refusal quickly became the main topic of their study. The study took place on a medical-surgical unit in the southeast of the United States. The study ran from October 2021 until September 2022 and measured the number of hospital-acquired VTEs. After the conclusion of the study, the article describes how the research team took their results to create a plan to decrease the number of VTEs and improve overall patient quality.

Overview

This article is very relevant to the discussion of VTEs and their impact on health care. The article covers how frequently these events occur, why they might occur, and what health care members can do to reduce their occurrence. The article also incorporates the three categories of quality improvement. For knowledge, this article discusses how different members of the health care team can make an impact in reducing the number of anticoagulant medication refusals. It also describes new ideas for how to provide patient education. For skills, the article discusses how these members can improve their approach to patients to increase their compliance. Lastly, the article implies that approaching the clients with a positive attitude and kindly educating them about the benefits of anticoagulant medication can increase their risk of compliance, thus improving their quality of care.

Quality Improvement

The study discussed in the article takes place on a medical-surgical unit of a hospital in the southeast region of the United States. However, the interventions discussed can be implemented in hospitals all over the country, if not globally. This is because the interventions for reducing patient refusal focuses on education. Taking the time to educate patients went a long way in reducing the number of medication refusals. While it did not eradicate medication refusals entirely, it did help lower the amount of them.

Implementing these interventions would not be difficult. The most important thing needed for implementation is open communication between all members of the health care team. If the nurse is unable to get the patient to comply after providing education, they should refer to their supervisor to provide education. If they fail, the provider should then provide further education in the hopes that the patient will then comply. These members need to be able to work together for the betterment of patient care. It is also important that education be provided to all staff. This means that any current staff as well as new hires need to be educated about the benefits and risks of anticoagulant therapy so they can relay proper information to their patients.

Implementation of these interventions would not only improve the quality of care. It is estimated that hospital-acquired venous thromboembolisms cost facilities around $5 billion each year (Barrett et al., 2024). However, if the quantity of these events were to be reduced, it is safe to assume that it would save these facilities money. This article did not dive into patient or nurse satisfaction as it focused more on quantitative data. That being said, the interventions laid out in the article do give nurses a model to follow which can help better their flow of care. Patient safety can also be positively affected by implementation of these interventions. As previously mentioned, nearly 100,000 Americans die every year due to a VTE. If prophylactic medication is

refused less and implemented more, the number of VTEs decreases. This decrease is important in preventing death related to these events (Barrett et al., 2024). Nursing safety is not mentioned, but improving the quality of care can help protect nurses from potential lawsuits or fatal errors.

Application to Nursing

Here add in a summary of the information learned to the application to practice. Follow the MEAL paragraph formatting and use Grammarly.com. Be sure to cover all aspects within the rubric. Be sure to use double space and to tab over for your first line of a new paragraph.

Practice

Paragraph goes here discussing the application to practice. Review the rubric for full requirements. Follow the MEAL paragraph formatting and use Grammarly.com.

Education

Paragraph goes here discussing the application to education. Review the rubric for full requirements. Follow the MEAL paragraph formatting and use Grammarly.com.

Research

Paragraph goes here discussing the application of research. Review the rubric for full requirements. Follow the MEAL paragraph formatting and use Grammarly.com.

Conclusion

Write a conclusion here in your overall paper. Review the rubric for full requirements. Follow the MEAL paragraph formatting and use Grammarly.com.

References

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