SOLUTIONS FOR PROJECT HANDS

Streamlining Charting Documents to Support Surgical Mission Trips

By Gillian Albert, Corrie Dangerfield and Ben Nehra
Getting to Know Project HANDS

• Project HANDS (Helping and Nurturing Developing Societies) is a Canadian non-profit organization

• The organization provides collaborative health care support to rural Guatemalan communities by supplying Canadian health care providers and resources for surgical missions trips

• Working in small local clinics with the partnership of Guatemalan health care providers, Project HANDS performs general, gynecological, and reconstructive surgeries
Streamlining Charting: Major Goals

- Effective management of the diversity of nursing and medical practices between Canada and Guatemala
  - Creating charting documents that reduce confusion and can be easily interpreted by health care providers from both countries

- Design of documents that accommodate bilingual instructions

- Reformatting of current documents to enhance clinical precision
  - Troubleshooting of potential errors or miscommunication in current charting documents
The Background Research

- CRNBC guidelines regarding nursing practice as a component of international development aid indicate that standards of practice must comply with the applicable standards of a nurse’s home practice environment
  - As such, documentation practices must be thorough and precise to match those of a typical Canadian clinical setting (such as a hospital)

- Research by De Marinis et al. (2010) demonstrated that on average only 40% of nursing activities are documented in nursing records

- Research by Baker et al (1999) suggested that the use of coordinated clinical pathways may prevent deviations from established standards of care

- Comprehensiveness and accuracy of what occurs in practice need to be evident in the documentation (my note: this is even more complicated when trying to keep documentation simple and uncluttered for purposes of language barriers and difference in nursing practice when in international situations)

- Improving awareness of the importance of accurate and complete documentation by those who use it may have added benefit to reducing patient safety errors and communicative errors.

- Document deficiency has the potential to increase communication breakdown and compromise patient safety
The Montreal Branch of MSF provided us with exemplars of their surgical guidelines for a picture of typical documentation standards among non-profit organizations.
Current Charting at Project HANDS

Examples of charting documents currently used by health care providers on Project HANDS missions.

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<th>DISCHARGE CHECKLIST</th>
<th>NAME:</th>
<th>DOB:</th>
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<td>V.S. (60 Minutes)</td>
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<td>Instructions</td>
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Above: Discharge Checklist
Right: Medication Administration Record
Revised Charting for Project HANDS (a sample)
Areas for Further Exploration

• In the context of remote surgical work in rural areas, is electronic charting a feasible option to increase consistency and accessibility?
  • Electronic record keeping and charting has been demonstrated to reduce errors (Cowen et al., 2007)

• What is the most efficient way to document transfer of accountability given this unique clinical setting?
  • The College of Nurses of Ontario recommends that health care providers be trained in a standardized form of communicating the parameters around transfer of accountability to minimize errors and missed information (2009)

• Should document orientation and expectations be discussed with mission volunteers in a training session prior to providing care?
References


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