Strategies for Improving Clinician Communication: Chart Review

Background
The goal of the Chart Review project was to develop a medical chart review tool to measure pediatric care problems including problematic clinical communication, adverse events, and medical errors.

Methods
- The research team used a case-control study
- A qualitative review of the “case” medical charts for patients who had experienced a high risk event (e.g. transfer from another facility, Critical Assessment Team (CAT) call, Safety Event Reporting System cases, Transfer to the PICU within 24 hrs of being admitted to the floor) was conducted
- A qualitative review of the “control” medical charts for patients in which none of the above experiences were known to have occurred, but matched with “case” charts based on age, gender, admitting unit, and date of admission was conducted.
- The research team reviewed the charts and identified elements related to problematic communication. From the reviews, the types of documentation reliably identified in the chart were compiled. The research team developed a draft chart abstraction tool that was tested by several nurses at a CPQSC site.

Results and Conclusions
Problematic communication identified included: (1) delayed response to patient decline; (2) discrepancies in clinician notes; (3) discrepancies or conflicts in orders; (4) missing documentation; and (5) protocol not observed.

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