



Education to Improve Patient Outcomes

**UVA Amherst Dialysis
Amherst, VA**

Contact Information

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Category:	Hand hygiene, patient falls and adherence to procedures
Type of Facility:	University of Virginia Dialysis Unit
Number of Patients:	96
Number of Physicians:	2

Background

In June 2008, various measurement tools indicated that UVA Amherst Dialysis needed an extensive educational program to foster improvement in their outcomes. The Mid-Atlantic Renal Coalition (MARC) 5-Diamond Patient Safety Program served this role. The 5-Diamond Program was developed by the ESRD Network of New England (Network 1) and the Mid-Atlantic Renal Coalition (Network 5) to assist dialysis facilities with the improvement of both staff and patient awareness of specific patient safety areas. The 5-Diamond Patient Safety program consists of 8 components. For each component completed, each facility will be tiered as a 1-Diamond, 2-Diamond, 3-Diamond, 4-Diamond, or 5-Diamond facility. The 5 Diamond Program has been endorsed by RPA and fulfills the Keeping Kidney Patients Safe Patient Safety Events in several areas including patient falls, medication errors and omission and hand hygiene. UVA Amherst Dialysis has completed 7 modules, thereby extending their 5-Diamond status a second term, until March 1, 2012. With a 35-person staff, they completed the following modules: Patient Safety Principles; Emergency Preparedness; Flu Vaccination; Hand Hygiene; Medication Reconciliation; Sharps Safety; and Slips, Trips, and Falls.

Policies and activities implemented

Amherst Dialysis has used the 5-Diamond Program educational modules as a building block to improve the quality of care provided at the facility. The hand hygiene module had a tremendous impact, sparking the incorporation of and adherence to better improvement in infection control practice. Its evolution was promoted by the key ingredient; education of all team members and patients. After the health care workers and patients learned of its importance, they offered suggestions to foster improvement. All team members accepted this challenge, prompting them to form eight staff groups. Each group was responsible for presenting their topic

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to fellow team members and patients during a predetermined month. They utilized the resources available through the MARC website to creatively disseminate the information.

As a result, the facility has made the following changes:

1. The strategic placement of hand sanitizer stations throughout the lobby and treatment area to enhance compliance.
2. Toilet seat coverings are now available in the restrooms.
3. “Cover Your Cough” station consisting of instructions, hand sanitizer, surgical masks with tissues was placed at the entrance of the facility.
4. Incorporation of various audits such as environmental to identify potential areas of concern related to safety (fall risk, infection control, etc.) as well as actual observation of hand washing and contact isolation practices to ensure compliance.
5. Obtaining surveillance cultures and taking the necessary action to eradicate organisms such as Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureas (MRSA).

Members of the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) committee recently developed a “How Do We Prevent Infections?” brochure, designed to educate patients on appropriate measures to prevent infections through access care, personal hygiene and immunizations. They plan to place it in the admission package and to review it annually. A periodic patient newsletter has also been developed to provide educational material on various topics including those learned from these modules. Additionally, Amherst’s dietitian team has been diligent in educating patients on the importance of phosphorous control through the use of medications and diet and have provided educational literature on various phosphate binders and Vitamin D analogs.

The facility improved its long standing exercise program. Building upon the lessons learned regarding fall prevention, they have utilized UVA resources to educate the team on the proper use of lift equipment and other devices.

Since beginning the program, Amherst has seen a reduction in the number of MRSA and VRE positive patients by more than 50 percent as well as a reduction in falls. They have seen an increase in availability of medication information and patient compliance with the exercise program.

Recommendations

Amherst reported the key ingredient to the success of the program is the involvement of all team members including the patients. Knowledge gained from the program prompted the social worker to organize the UVA-ADF Patient Advisory group. This group represents a patient from each hemodialysis shift and the group has been eager to learn how they can maintain optimum health. “Witnessing this action is astonishing,” said Kim Smith, RN Administrative Coordinator. “These outcomes also have encouraged health care workers to learn even more and share their knowledge. Just like the flu, education is contagious!”