

Exceeding Great Expectations for Unit Dose Distribution

Background

- Pharmacy Services is committed to providing safe, effective medication management for patients.
- Unit dose systems, compared to other drug distribution systems, are safer for the patient, more efficient and economical for the organization, and a more effective method of utilizing pharmacy staff.

Rationale & Objectives

- In unit dose distribution systems for acute care beds, medications are contained in single unit packages, dispensed as ready-to-administer as possible and not more than a 24 hour supply is delivered or available to the patient care area at any one time.
- Within Alberta Health Services (AHS), pharmacy services sites have been working towards transition to a unit dose distribution model within existing fiscal and human resource allocations.
- Key Performance Indicator (KPI) data for unit dose distribution is used to demonstrate Pharmacy Services' commitment to safe medication management for patients to both internal and external stakeholders.

Methods/Implementation

- Annually, AHS pharmacies at sites with acute care beds participate in a survey to report progress towards achieving a unit dose distribution model.
- Survey results are analyzed and report the percentage of acute care sites that use a unit dose drug distribution system for 90% or more of their acute care beds.

Results & Evaluation

- Since this KPI was established for the Pharmacy Services program in 2010, significant success has been achieved. In March 2011, 46.8% of AHS sites provided unit dose distribution to 90% or more of acute care beds. As of March 2014, Pharmacy Services achieved 87.2% of sites achieving this optimal medication distribution standard, exceeding the CSHP 2015 target for this patient population.
- Provincial improvement of this indicator has been driven most significantly through successes achieved in Central and North regions, despite significant challenges in having high numbers of sites to address.

CSHP 2015 Goal Alignment:

Goal 4: *Increase the extent to which pharmacy departments in hospitals and related healthcare settings have a significant role in improving the safety of medication use.*

CSHP 2015 Objective Highlighted

Objective 4.7
75% of pharmacies in hospitals utilize a unit-dose system for drug distribution for 90% or more of their total beds.

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