

World Patient Safety
Engaging patients for patient safety

Title: Addressing patient safety through improvement of prescribing etiquette by Health care workers at Kilifi County Referral Hospital, Kenya

Author; Sheba Mohammad, Nadia Aliyan

Affiliation: Kilifi County Referral Hospital, Kenya (KCRH)

Contact Email: nadia.aliyan@gmail.com, shebaalshaybah@gmail.com

Background: Prescription based errors remain one of the pertinent channels that hurt patient safety in hospitals more so in manual based systems. Good prescribing etiquette is a reliable forefront method to reduce medical errors and enhance patient safety in the hospital. Furthermore, it influences diagnostic stewardship and rational antimicrobial prescribing practices which also contribute towards patient protection. Standardized prescribing behaviors promote quality improvement and effective patient management and safety through right drug choices, right dosing and right administration.

Methods: We carried out a 3 month campaign of serial continuous medical education sessions which were designed and implemented between July and September 2023 as a combined sensitization on the use of antibiotics followed by a workshop that included face to face sessions on safe prescribing habits. The primary outcome measure was the change in Health care workers' knowledge about antibiotic resistance and rational drug use through good prescription etiquette. A pre-survey and post survey course questionnaires were utilized to assess this outcome.

World Patient Safety Engaging patients for patient safety

Results: The stakeholders are the prescribers, pharmacists, nurses and their respective patients. We noted in the post survey that there was a greater knowledge on the need for legibly prescribed dosing to avert adverse effects. The post survey showed there was a tangible increase from 35% to 90% awareness on prescribing criteria such as right drug, right route, and right dosing; completing patient details, including the correct diagnosis and the right date of issue and sealing the prescription with diligently filled prescriber details. The process also involved engaging the patient on the therapeutic objective of the prescribed drugs, as well as empowering patients through education on the adverse effects anticipated with the use of the prescribed medications. There was focus on setting up quantifiable measures of success such as avoiding near miss and sentinel events through patient safety incident reports and prescription audits.

Conclusion: There has been continuous reinforcement by the facility physicians and pharmacists with the goal to reduce medication errors and improper diagnosis and hence offer best treatment choices. The Prescription audits after the workshop show an improvement and prove that the teams are sensitized and appreciative of the need to practice patient safety measures. This process has to be dynamic and continuous with regular reassessment by the facility therapeutic committees via Prescription audits, incident reports and health care worker induction packages.