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A quality improvement project to improve neurology inpatient referrals

Abstract:

The neurology department in Birmingham Heartlands Hospital spotted that neurology inpatient referrals were not being submitted with adequate information. There was a lack of basic information in the email referrals about patient history and investigation findings. Particularly, there little evidence of a neurological examination being carried out which threatens patient safety. This increased waiting times, bed space and decreased the quality of patient care as neurologists had limited information. We incorporated a proforma containing questions for the referrer to include all necessary information in the referral. This should aid the neurology team in prioritising patients more effectively. Additionally, improving the quality and timing of care to the patient. We conducted a baseline audit using a questionnaire assessing if the information was sufficient regarding patient history, examination, and investigations done. We introduced a pro-forma, then repeated the audit and assessed the improvement by the same questionnaire. We used referrals to neurology from a 10-day period. Data was collected from inpatient neurology referrals emails. It was analysed using Microsoft tools like excel, further elaborated by graphical representation. Findings showed that patient name, age and DOB were included on every referral letter post intervention. There was a 28% rise in clinicians recording patient social histories. There was an increase in relevant past medical history recorded however a decrease in medication history recorded. Overall, we found that post intervention there was an increase in basic information included and neurological examinations. We aim to make this pro-forma consistently used for future neurology referrals.

Biography

Henna Ahmed is in her final year (Year 5) of studying Medicine and Surgery (MBChB) at the University of Birmingham Medical School. She has an interest in medical research that improves patient care and leadership. She has presented her research including audits and quality improvement projects at national conferences and has had her work published. Due to her interests, she has many leadership roles as she is ambassador for national committees such as the Pakistani association of Medical Students and Academics and leaders of change. She has an interest in teaching and been awarded a national leadership award for this.

Aneesa Imran is in her final year of studying Medicine and Surgery (MBChB) at the University of Birmingham. She has an interest in General Practice and is serving as a lead committee member of the university GP society. With a drive for leadership and a dedication to patient care, she aims to make a positive impact in clinical practice. Her work includes prize-winning quality improvement projects and audits in neurology, endocrinology, obstetrics and gynaecology. All which have been presented at national conferences. She is passionate about medical education and leadership, having organised and delivered several large events aimed at helping prospective medical students prepare for interviews.