



sentara nurse

Educate Before You Medicate: Improving Patient Comprehension

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BACKGROUND:

There is a positive correlation between patient comprehension of medications and compliance. This project was conducted on a 24-bed medical/oncology unit in a community hospital to improve patient understanding of their medications.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

Healthcare systems, clinician, and insurance companies are becoming more aware that noncompliance with medications is contributing to higher healthcare costs and poor patient outcomes (Circulation. 2009). National Research Corporation (NRC) scores showed many patients did not understand the indications of their medications. From May-August 2015 scores for the question addressing medication comprehension averaged 71.65% against an NRC average of 77.6%.

METHODOLOGY:

Patients were educated regarding medications using Care Notes available through Micromedex. Care Notes are written on a fifth grade level, making them easy to understand. The are also available in multiple languages. Printed Care Notes were provided and reviewed with each patient using the teach back strategy. Additionally, registered nurses were educated on the accessibility and use of Care Notes. NRC averages increased from 71.65 to 80.78% with a high score of 93.3% between September 2015-January 2016.

RESULTS:

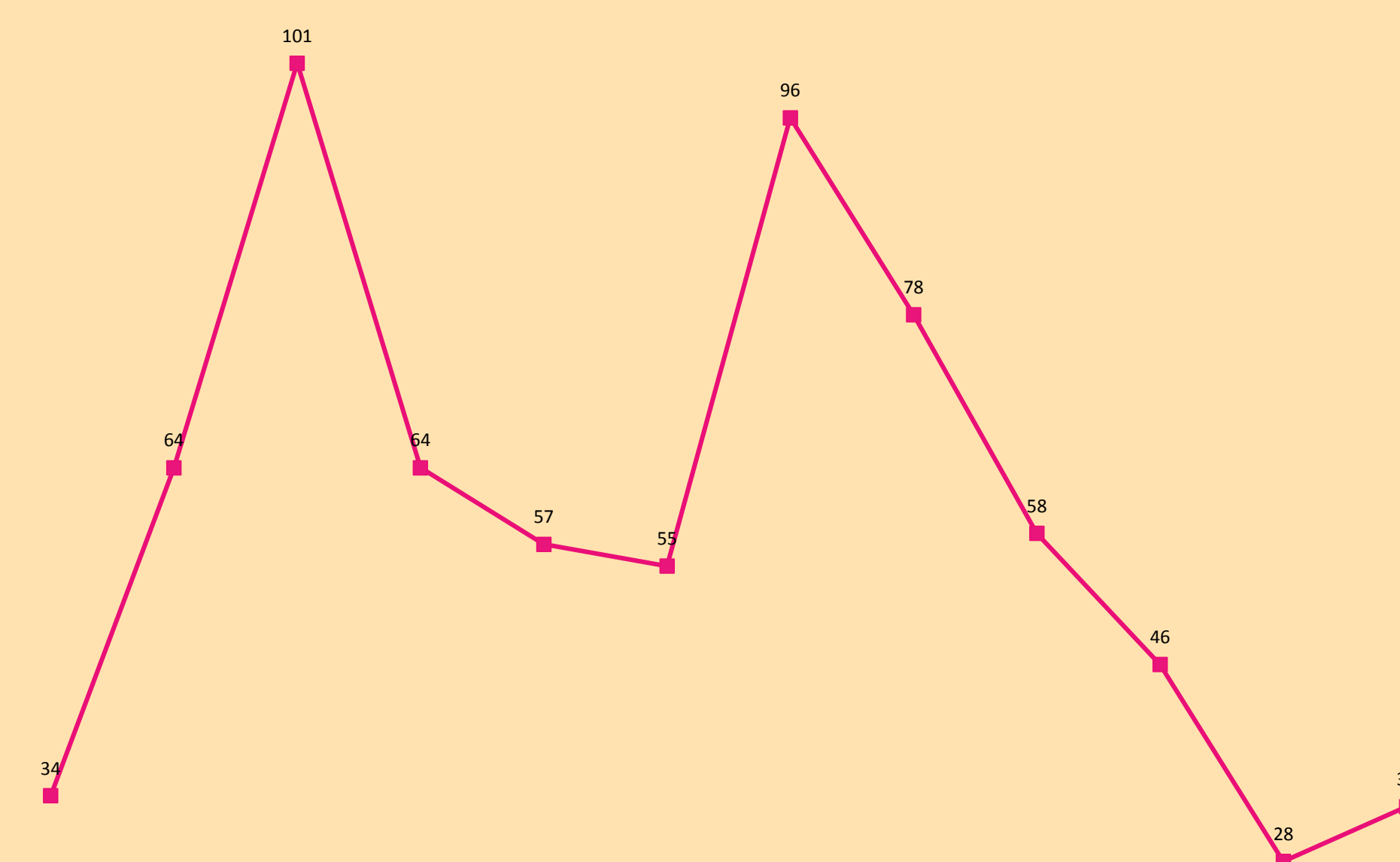
The expectation of the project was to increase NRC scores by enhancing patient knowledge thereby improving patient outcomes. Nurses learned new resources for accomplishing this task. NRC scores increased an average of 9.13 points for patient comprehension of medications. An additional unexpected benefit of this project was increased use of Care Notes for patient education for disease processes and dietary restrictions.

CONCLUSIONS:

Ultimately, comprehension of medications could impact compliance and thus reduce readmissions. This process also impacts the relationship between the nurses and the patients. Preliminary findings are encouraging. Limitations include the short duration of the project and increased use of resource staff that are not familiar with the project.

FINDINGS:

GRAPH



Care Notes: Example

Amlodipine (Oral) (Tablet, Tablet, Disintegrating) - DrugNote, English

Amlodipine (By mouth)

Amlodipine (am-LOE-di-peen)

Treats high blood pressure and angina (chest pain). This medicine is a calcium channel blocker.

Brand Name(s):Norvasc

There may be other brand names for this medicine.

When This Medicine Should Not Be Used:

This medicine is not right for everyone. Do not use it if you had an allergic reaction to amlodipine.

How to Use This Medicine:

Tablet, Dissolving Tablet

Take your medicine as directed. Your dose may need to be changed several times to find what works best for you. Take this medicine at the same time each day.

Read and follow the patient instructions that come with this medicine. Talk to your doctor or pharmacist if you have any questions.

Missed dose: Take a dose as soon as you remember. If it has been **more than 12 hours** since you were supposed to take your dose, skip the missed dose and take your next regular dose at the regular time.

Store the medicine in a closed container at room temperature, away from heat, moisture, and direct light.

Drugs and Foods to Avoid:

Ask your doctor or pharmacist before using any other medicine, including over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal products.

Some medicines can affect how amlodipine works. Tell your doctor if you are also using any of the following:

Clarithromycin, cyclosporine, diltiazem, itraconazole, ritonavir, sildenafil, simvastatin, tacrolimus

Warnings While Using This Medicine:

Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or breastfeeding, or if you have liver disease, heart disease, coronary artery disease, or aortic stenosis.

This medicine could lower your blood pressure too much, especially when you first use it or if you are dehydrated. Stand or sit up slowly if you feel lightheaded or dizzy.

Your doctor will check your progress and the effects of this medicine at regular visits. Keep all appointments.

Do not stop using this medicine without asking your doctor, even if you feel well. This medicine will not cure high blood pressure, but it will help keep it in normal range. You may have to take blood pressure medicine for the rest of your life.

Keep all medicine out of the reach of children. Never share your medicine with anyone.

Possible Side Effects While Using This Medicine:

Call your doctor right away if you notice any of these side effects:

Allergic reaction: Itching or hives, swelling in your face or hands, swelling or tingling in your mouth or throat, chest tightness, trouble breathing

Lightheadedness, dizziness

New or worsening chest pain

Swelling in your hands, ankles, or legs

Trouble breathing, nausea, unusual sweating, fainting

If you notice other side effects that you think are caused by this medicine, tell your doctor.

Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088

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Amlodipine (Oral) (Tablet, Tablet, Disintegrating) - DrugNote, English

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References:

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