An Rx for improved patient safety

Ensuring patient safety requires MercyOne, its processes and colleagues to Improve Daily, and embrace bold new ideas to Innovate. The Medication History Technician Program is an example of how putting our Cultural Beliefs in action has made a positive impact on Key Results.

A primary goal identified by The Joint Commission (TJC) is to maintain and communicate accurate patient medication information, allowing safe prescription of medications in the future. This task is often complicated by polypharmacy, medication changes by specialists, compliance issues and more, increasing the risk for costly adverse medication errors in hospitalized patients. To increase safety and quality, MercyOne Des Moines and West Des Moines Medical Centers medication history technicians (MHTs) obtain a Best Possible Medication History (BPMH). This work includes taking a thorough history of all regular medication taken by a patient prior to admission medication reconciliation, using a number of different sources of information. Completing a BPMH typically takes 15-30 minutes.

Beginning January 2014, MercyOne’s MHT model reassigned the medication history process throughout the hospitals, resulting in significant avoidance of potential errors, and more accurate medication histories. In addition, nurses, pharmacists and providers are allowed to devote more attention and time to other aspects of patient care.

“By making the effort to collect a complete medication history of our hospitalized patients, we have experienced tremendous results, improving Quality and Consumer Experience at MercyOne. The success of this program is an example of collaboration and excellence demonstrated by faculty and residents of the MercyOne Internal Medicine Residency Program, as well as our colleagues working in the Pharmacy department,” said Candace Jordan, pharmacy market director. “By verifying patients’ medication history, we reduce significant errors and increase confidence to reconcile the verified list. MercyOne is a safer place for our patients because of our medication history technicians.”

Leading the industry through education

Medication history programs are a hot topic in the health care industry due to the increased opportunity for error and the risk associated with these errors. However, little data existed on what specific factors place an individual patient at higher risk for medication error upon admission to a hospital. The following abstracts from MercyOne physicians and residents have been published in Journal of Hospital Medicine 2020:

- Impact of a Hospital-Wide Medication Reconciliation Program on Error Reduction in Medication Histories: A Categorical Analysis and Within Subject Study (Abstract 311; Aug. 27, 2020)
- Identifying Factors Placing Patients at Highest Risk for Medication Error: Regression Analysis of Medication Reconciliation Program at Medium-Sized Midwest Hospital (Abstract 310; Aug. 27, 2020)
- Factors That Increase Time Obtaining Home Medication Histories: Analysis of an Established Medication Reconciliation Program at a Medium-Sized Midwest Hospital (Abstract 309; Aug. 27, 2020)
Cardiovascular team celebrates milestone 200th Watchman implant

MercyOne Iowa Heart Center cardiologists have implanted their 200th Watchman, a device that helps reduce the risk for stroke for patients with atrial fibrillation (A-fib), a condition that can cause blood to pool in the heart.

"Implanting this device brings peace of mind to patients fearful of a stroke," explained Robert Hoyt, MD, electrophysiologist, MercyOne Iowa Heart Center. "To be able to say we have given 200 people comfort with the Watchman is truly an honor for this team."

Dr. Hoyt performed the 200th implant in mid-July on a 79-year-old female from Ankeny. The day after her procedure, she was released from the hospital with no pain or complications.

The Watchman program at MercyOne Des Moines Medical Center was recently recognized by CommonSpirit Health as a Center of Excellence.

"We were the first in the region to offer the Watchman procedure and are proud to have become such a regional destination for expert cardiac care," said Dr. Hoyt.

Many with A-fib take multiple blood thinners to reduce the risk for stroke. However, the risk of major and minor bleeding – and the risk for falls – results in the potential for serious complications for patients on blood thinners.

The Watchman implant works by sealing off the heart’s left atrial appendage – a small sac where most strokes originate in people with A-fib. When this is sealed, blood is no longer able to pool in the appendage, so clots cannot form. Using advanced imaging, the implant team guides the device through a vein in the groin to the heart, where it is deployed like a parachute to seal the appendage’s opening.

To learn more about the Watchman procedure at MercyOne Iowa Heart Center, visit www.iowaheart.com, or call 515-229-7449.

Did you know

You can earn wellness dollars for improving your blood pressure. If you have improved your blood pressure by at least one risk category since the last time you submitted a biometric screening form, you can earn $30 through the CHI Wellness Program by submitting another biometric screening form. Or, if you submit a biometric screening form and your blood pressure is already in the ideal range (≤119/79), you can also earn $30. Please refer to the “Wellness” page when logged on Inside CHI for more details and to view the risk categories. To access a biometric screening form, select the “Programs” tab, then select “Biometric Screening,” and the orange “Start Now” button. Print your form and take it to your next biometric screening appointment with your provider.

MercyOne leadership cares about your health.

"High blood pressure increases your risk over time for heart attack, stroke, kidney failure and other chronic conditions. It is important you take a proactive approach to your health by having your blood pressure monitored on a regular basis. In addition to regular visits with your provider, the Wellness Program has a variety of tools and resources available to assist you in managing or improving your blood pressure," said Eric Larson, manager, MercyOne Des Moines Cardiac Rehab.
Celebrate our heritage with fellowship, prayer and service

One day doesn’t capture the impact of the Sisters of Mercy, so we’ll be hosting a week of activities to celebrate the legacy entrusted to us. We hope you can participate in these activities and reflect on the Sisters’ devotion and commitment to service, which continue to guide our patient and community care.

**MASS ON MERCY DAY**
- Thurs., Sept. 24, 11:30 a.m.
  Our Lady of Mercy Chapel
  West Des Moines Medical Center
- Fri., Sept. 25, 11:30 a.m.
  Mass celebrated by Bishop William Joensen
  East Tower Auditorium
  Des Moines Medical Center
  NOTE: Seating will be limited. Colleagues may also participate via Zoom.

**MERCY DAY MEALS**
- Des Moines Medical Center
  - Sun., Sept. 20, 5:30-7:30 p.m.
  - Thurs., Sept. 24, 10:45 a.m.-1:30 p.m., 5-7:30 p.m.
  - Fri., Sept. 25, 1-3 a.m.*
  All meals served in the East Tower Auditorium. (*NOTE: The cafeteria will not be open for third shift meal service.)

- West Des Moines Medical Center
  - Sun., Sept. 20, 5:30-7:30 p.m., Atrium area
  - Mon., Sept. 21, 5-6 a.m., 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m., 5-7:30 p.m., Atrium area

- Clive Health Plaza
  - Wed., Sept. 23, 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m., MercyOne Comfort Health Center for Women

- Ankeny Health Plaza
  - Wed., Sept. 23, 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

**MERCY MILE**
Test your MercyOne Des Moines and West Des Moines knowledge while getting in some exercise walking the Mercy Mile. The course circles each medical center’s location. Your route will be marked with signs with MercyOne Des Moines or West Des Moines trivia. The courses will be marked from Mon., Sept. 21, through Fri., Sept. 25.

**MERCY DAY 5K**
The virtual Mercy Day 5K is free for the communities we serve, and can be run or walked, from Thurs., Sept. 24, to Sun., Sept. 27. The event is family-friendly, and all ages are welcome to participate. Learn more and register.

**SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE**
From Mon., Sept. 21, through Wed., Sept. 30, we will collect school supplies to be distributed to children of our partner schools. Collection locations for this Mission on the Move activity are:
- Des Moines Medical Center, Loading Dock
- West Des Moines Medical Center, Loading Dock
- Courier will pick up at individual clinics

**DIVERSION SUPPLY DRIVE**
Help our patients relax and pass the time while in the hospital by donating a puzzle or game book during the special Mission on the Move drive, Mon., Sept. 21, through Wed., Sept. 30. Place your donation of new activity books:
- Des Moines Medical Center, Loading Dock
- West Des Moines Medical Center, Loading Dock
- Courier will pick up at individual clinics