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Integrated Therapy Unit Home Medication Storage Process

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Background

Historical opportunities around medication reconciliation errors

- Patient admitted and parent confirmed medications on intake list
- Medication reconciliation generated and medications continued
- Over 48 hours later discovered medication dosage was reported and entered incorrectly (10x dose)

Practice change instituted

Parents instructed to bring home medications to bedside with them on admission

Additional safety mechanisms

- Only nurse and provider in the room for initial hour of admission- protected time to ensure medication accuracy
- Dual nurse verification of prior-to-admission medications to ensure accuracy

Hospital Relocation

Integrated therapy unit transitioned from the free-standing facility to specialized unit within larger hospital campus

Medications were stored in locked cabinet in the patient's room and caregiver kept cabinet key

This led to >5 instances in which caregiver gave medications without nursing awareness

Increased potential for medication error

Additional home medication issues involving discharges

- Delays related to missing medications
- Home medications delivered without nursing notification

Home medication storage process had to be re-evaluated



Literature Review

- Children with special health care needs (CSHCN) experience an average of 3 medication discrepancies resulting in 20% of patients not using medication medications as directed and 16% experiencing a delay in therapy (Louiselle et al., 2021)
- Transitions from home to hospital (admission) and hospital to home (discharge) are the highest risk points for medication errors (Condren et al., 2019)
- Medication errors are a leading cause of harm in healthcare (Uhlenhopp et al., 2020)
- With an increased quantity of prescribed medications patients have a higher chance of medication discrepancy and a higher incidence of more than one medication error (Iturgoyen et al., 2020)
- Systematic review and meta-analysis showed a significant reduction in 30-day readmission rate with detailed admission med reconciliation and discharge medication reconciliation (Mekonnen et al., 2016)

Two components of medication reconciliation

- **Admission:** Accurate entry of patient's medications by reviewing home medications
- **Discharge:** All medications reviewed comparing after visit summary (AVS) to the prescription bottle to the inpatient medication administration record (MAR)

Practice changes

New practice established in collaboration with accreditation, pharmacy, and legal affairs

- Families are encouraged to take medications home after admission for safest practice
- If family is unable to do this, home medications are stored in secure locked cabinet or locked refrigerator in the patient's room
- An intake form is completed for all stored medications
- The nurse will return all home medications at discharge after verifying them with the AVS and MAR to ensure correct dosage

Managing Your Child's Home Medicines During a Hospital Stay

- When your child is admitted to the hospital, we will review the medicines that you have brought from home.
- Your care team will complete a form that lists your child's medicines and check the doses.
- The medicines will be reviewed by the care team
- Medicines (including narcotics) you bring from home will remain in the hospital during your child's stay. The medicines will be stored in either a secure locked cabinet or locked medicine refrigerator in your child's room.
- If you need to get to your child's medicines, please let your nurse know.
- Any medicines that are delivered to your child's room before your child is discharged from the hospital will be stored in the same locked cabinet or refrigerator until discharge.
- At discharge, your care team will review all your child's medicine with you and return them to you to take home.
- If any of your child's medicines are going to expire or have expired during your child's stay, you can place them in the green bins located in our outpatient pharmacy. Ask your nurse for more information and how they can assist you.