

REVISION OF INPATIENT MEDICATION LABELS TO IMPROVE PEDIATRIC ASTHMA CARE

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Background: Prior to June 2013, patients who required inhaler treatments during hospitalization were not permitted to be discharged with inpatient inhalers at Nationwide Children's Hospital. This was a result of inpatient labels not meeting Ohio Board of Pharmacy outpatient label requirements. Inhalers were discarded after use of very few doses leading to suboptimal use of resources and increased costs to patients, third-party payers, and the healthcare system. Many hospitals and health-systems in states, including Ohio, face similar challenges with a variety of multi-dose medications. **Methods:** Nationwide Children's Hospital utilizes Epic® as its electronic medical record (EMR) system. Changes were made in the EMR so that inpatient medication labels met both inpatient and outpatient labeling requirements. Items required for outpatient labeling requirements include the hospital address, phone number, directions for administration, and the prescriber's name. Hospital policies were updated to allow patients to receive inhalers at discharge with required documentation in the EMR specifying patient receipt of inpatient inhaler for outpatient use. **Results:** This change in the EMR dramatically decreased waste and costs to the healthcare system. Upon review of asthma discharges in a 2 month period, a potential cost savings of over \$4700 was identified with albuterol inhalers alone. These changes were initially aimed at inhalers but have since been expanded to other multi-dose medications including eye drops, ear drops, and nasal sprays. **Conclusions:** By making changes to inpatient labels within the EMR, medication resources can be better optimized and provide an uninterrupted medication supply as patients with asthma and other chronic conditions transition from an inpatient to outpatient setting.

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