Monitoring Concordance in the Management of Transfusing Blood Components in Cirrhotic Patients for Paracentesis with Evidence-Based Guidelines

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Background

- The frequency of chronic liver disease is on the rise, with approximately 150,000 new cases detected annually in the United States. About 20% of these cases are accompanied by cirrhosis upon initial diagnosis, although this figure may not accurately reflect the full extent of the disease’s prevalence[1-2]. Studies suggest that up to one-third of patients are not diagnosed until autopsy[3-4]. Unfortunately, morbidity and mortality rates among this patient population are substantial, accounting for 1.03 million deaths globally each year.
- Patients with cirrhosis frequently exhibit abnormal results in conventional hemostasis tests, including platelet (PLT) count, prothrombin time (PT), and partial thromboplastin time (PTT), which may indicate an increased risk of bleeding. However, research utilizing global hemostasis testing suggests that stable cirrhosis patients actually exhibit balanced hemostasis despite the abnormal results in routine tests[5]. Despite the limitations of conventional hemostatic tests, clinicians often rely on them to determine whether to transfuse PLTs, plasma, or cryoprecipitate. This approach persists despite limited evidence supporting the use of arbitrary laboratory values to guide prophylactic or therapeutic transfusions[6].

Objective

- Decrease unnecessary infusion of blood products in cirrhotic patients > 18 years of age at Medical City Weatherford undergoing invasive medical procedures
- Implement a problem-solving to design and iteratively implement interventions which enable implement intervention which enables clinical staff to develop, test, and implement changes and allow learning through trial and error, consensus building, and communications

Cause and Effect

- Decrease unnecessary infusion of blood products

Process Flow

- Screen and select PLTs for patients
- Optimize measurement techniques
- Implement visual cues and reminders for clinical staff
- Distribute pocket cards with evidence-based transfusion guideline (Table 1)
- Monthly data run charts, which will enable us to visually display process performance by addressing variation and performance

Discussion

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>DMAIC Framework Timeline</th>
<th>Goal Completion Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Define - Define the problem, improvement activity, opportunity for improvement, the project goals, and customer (internal and external) requirements</td>
<td>03/01/2023</td>
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<tr>
<td>Measure - Process map for recording the activities performed as part of a process; Capability analysis to assess the ability of a process to meet specifications</td>
<td>03/01/2023</td>
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<td>Analyze - The process to determine root causes of variation and performance</td>
<td>04/01/2023</td>
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<td>Improve - process performance by addressing and eliminating the root causes</td>
<td>05/01/2023</td>
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<td>Control – the improved process and future process performance</td>
<td>06/01/2023</td>
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Conclusion and Next Steps

The following outcomes will be assessed through retrospective data analysis from electronic health records (EHR):
- Percentage of indicated transfusion meeting requirement
- Monthly data run charts, which will enable us to visually display and assess outcomes in a time

This initiative aims to reduce unnecessary transfusions in cirrhotic patients to prevent the overuse of blood products. Currently, the MCW facility lacks official guidelines for administering these agents, which can hypothetically lead to procedural delays, prolonged hospital stays, and the potential development of complications from transfusion reactions. Additionally, this overuse can increase the financial burden on patients and healthcare systems. It would be interesting to develop a metric system that can be followed to compare patient outcomes.

References


This research was supported (in whole or in part) by HCA Healthcare and/or an HCA Healthcare affiliated entity. The views expressed in this publication represent those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of HCA Healthcare or any of its affiliated entities.