Anticoagulation RNs will Demonstrate Competence & Consistency in Practice
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Background
Anticoagulation management should utilize a standardized, best-practice approach to produce high quality outcomes with less risk to the patient. Current practice had multiple areas that needed improvement.
- RNs are to follow specific protocols for warfarin and heparin management which are based on the CHEST Guidelines (under direct physician supervision).
- Initial training consisted of an online class not specifically designed for RNs.
- No standardized resources during orientation.
- Inconsistencies in practice remained.
- There are 43 Anticoagulation Clinic sites.

Purpose
Create a consistent, best-practice, protocol driven management of anticoagulation therapy.
- Design a standardized workflow.
- Develop a standardized approach to RN orientation.
- Provide resources for nurses.
- Create an initial competency process.

Approach
A DNP student partnered with education to develop 3 online modules. They included:
- Hemostasis: Physiology & Pathophysiology.
- Anticoagulation Drugs & Protocols.
- Patient Education & Engagement Strategies.

RN attends an in-person class focusing on:
- RN scope of practice for ambulatory care.
- Ambulatory anticoagulation clinic protocols.
- Documentation in the EMR.
- Resources.
- Patient scenarios and workflow.

Approach cont.
- After attending the in-person class, the RN completes a multiple-choice test with a passing score of 80%.
- The test is conducted online and they are able to utilize resources as they would in practice.
- Completion of the education and test concludes their initial competency.

Results
- 67 RNs have completed the training and passed the test.
- The RNs were provided with updated RN orientation checklists, incorporating the Scope and Standards of Practice for Professional Ambulatory Care Nursing.
- Cost savings to organization is approximately $1,000 per RN.

Discussion
- Outcomes demonstrate that implementation of a standardized, coordinated, best-practice approach:
  - Reduces the risk of morbidity and mortality.
  - Improves patient outcomes.
  - RNs must follow the standardized protocol and workflow to achieve best outcomes.

Discussion cont.
- Patients managed by RNs in anticoagulation clinics have:
  - INRs monitored more frequently.
  - Therapeutic range achieved more often.
- Evaluation of education shows:
  - 97% thought that the education provided foundational knowledge.
  - 96% would be able to apply what they learned on the job.
- The education created consistency and best practice implementation.

Implications for Practice
- Nursing professional development (NPD) practitioners are able to develop and implement an initial competency education for RNs in anticoagulation clinics.
- There are challenges with obtaining data on the number of anticoagulation RNs due to inconsistent job descriptions.
- Next steps will include ongoing professional development of anticoagulation RNs.

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