KNOWLEDGE IS POWER – UNDERSTANDING ASTHMA

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Introduction

Asthma is the most common chronic childhood disease not only is it the main reason for ER visits and hospital stay for children, hospital re-admission rates are also high. Hospital re-admission rates for children with asthma at Cincinnati Children's in 2006 was 38%. The most common reason for these re-admissions is the lack of adherence to a treatment regiments, prescribed for the child. Studies have shown that children with chronic diseases despite education, may not be following prescribed treatment regiments.

The aim at Cincinnati Children's is to reduce the amount of hospital re-admissions for patients with asthma. To accomplish this aim we have adopted a pre-packaged asthma education packet from Monaghan Medical Corporation, Doc Monaghan™, and we developed an asthma action plan. With the utilization of these items the patient and families will have a written plan for managing the child's asthma, along with a workbook that the families can have as a reference source, and to share with extended family members.

Methods:

Each patient admitted with a diagnosis of asthma is given an asthma action plan. The plan is used to develop a stepwise approach for patients and families to control their child's asthma at home. The plan is reviewed with the patients primary care physician during rounds.

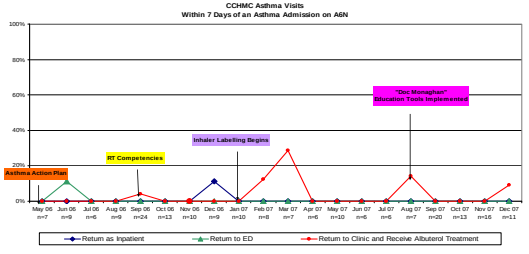
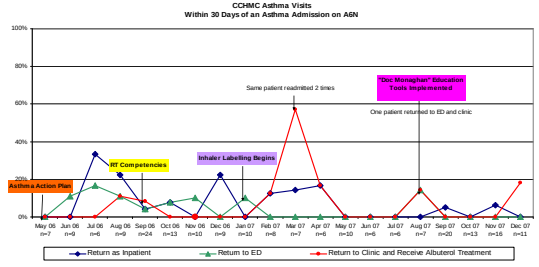
To standardize asthma education Cincinnati Children's Hospital incorporated the Doc Monaghan™ Packet by Monaghan Medical Corporation. Patients with asthma receive the Doc Monaghan™ packet upon admission by a respiratory therapist who instructs the patient and family members to view the enclosed DVD. The respiratory therapist then reviews the content of the DVD and workbook during the patients hospitalization.

Respiratory Therapist were deemed competent on the use of a MDI and Spacer to ensure consistent education for patients and families.

Re-labelling of MDI's used during hospitalization ensured that patients were leaving the hospital with medication they needed to control their asthma at home.

Asthma Action Plan

Results

With the use of the Doc Monaghan™ Education Package for standardization of asthma education, along with a completed asthma action plan, Cincinnati Children's has been able to decrease the amount of re-admission of asthma patients into the hospital from 38% in June of 2006 to 0% in December 2007.

The level of return to the emergency room, and the out patient clinic still occurs, however the severity of the patient's asthma is low which avoids the potential of a hospital readmission. The consistency of the asthma education, and the completed asthma action plan has allowed us to decrease the number of readmission to the inpatient unit. Our next steps will be to spread this to other units within Cincinnati Children's that care for patients with asthma.