

Quality Management in Health Care



OUTCOMES MANAGEMENT

Topics Covered in This Lecture

- ❑ Outcomes management project
 1. Select population and desired outcomes
 2. Define ideal process
 3. Stabilize the process
 4. Analyze process and outcome relationship
 5. Feedback

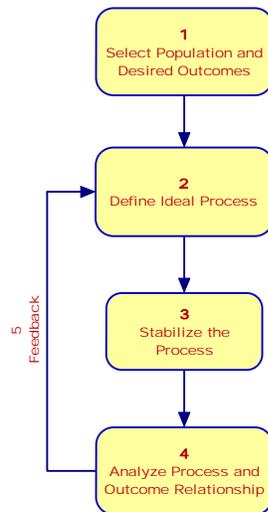


The study of patient care outcomes and the effect of various health care interventions on outcomes has been actively pursued by the medical professions for more than 200 years. The goal of these studies has always been to improve patient outcomes. While evaluating the relationship between process and outcome is not a new science, it has assumed greater importance in today's health care economic climate.

The need for detailed information on quality of care and outcomes is one result of the increased expectations of various stakeholders (patients, caregivers, payers, health care organizations) coupled with pressures to lessen costs. In this environment, "outcomes management" has flourished.

In this lecture I'll describe how outcomes management projects are conducted and detail each of the five steps.

Outcomes Management Project



Steps of an outcomes management project

Outcomes management involves the collection, analysis, evaluation, and dissemination of information about the outcomes of medical or surgical interventions to improve the processes of health care. Outcomes management consists of five steps, illustrated in the figure on this slide.

- An outcomes management project starts with the selection of a study population of patients and identification of desired outcomes.
- Next the ideal process for achieving desired outcomes is defined. Information about the ideal process is disseminated to caregivers using a variety of tools and techniques.
- Once dissemination has occurred, data is gathered to determine whether or not the desired outcomes were actually achieved and if not, why not.
- The information gathered during step four, the analysis phase, is used to improve upon the ideal process. Feedback (step 5) from implementing the desired process is used to make future improvements.

Each step of an outcomes management project is presented in greater detail in the remainder of this lecture.

How Can Goals be Achieved?

- Identify improvement opportunities



The outcomes management project team identifies the key processes that they think are most likely the probable causes of undesirable outcomes. Many of these key processes will cross department and discipline boundaries.

For example, if the goal of the outcomes management project is to reduce the number of undetected esophageal intubations, the team would brainstorm all the possible causes of this undesirable outcomes. They could use a cause-and-effect diagram to categorize their ideas.

Next they would gather data to determine which of the processes are most problematic.

Clinical Path Admission for Treatment of Depression

	ASSESSMENT PHASE	TREATMENT PHASE	DAY OF DISCHARGE
CONSULTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old records • Evaluate legal status 		
TESTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thyroid Cascade • B12 • Folate • Fasting CBC, SMAC • U/A 	Review of patient's medications and patient's response to medications (routine & as needed)	Discharge medications
MEDS	Medication evaluation	----->	----->
TREATMENTS	Per multidisciplinary treatment plan	----->	----->
ACTIVITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fall pre-cautions • Suicide precautions (if indicated) 	----->	----->
NURSING TREATMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zung Scale • Assess: suicide 	----->	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zung Scale
REHAB SERVICE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occupational therapy evaluation • Social Service evaluation • Group assignment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OT/SS summary • Group attendance 	----->
TEACHING	• Patient/caregiver/family orientation to program	Med/illness	-----> Discharge instructions
DISCHARGE PLANNING		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine discharge needs • Public Health Nurse assessment as needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete referral forms. • Confirm discharge plan w/team & family. • Arrange transportation.

The format for a clinical path is similar to a tool introduced during World War I, the Gantt chart. The Gantt chart is developed by identifying the steps necessary to obtain a final work result by projecting backward, step-by-step from end result to actions. The final work is displayed in a matrix format showing the sequence of operations for each of the major work functions.

In general, on a clinical path the major functions of patient care are listed in the first column, on the left side of the matrix and the time progress steps (phases, levels of care, weeks, days, hours, etc.) are shown across the top row. The format is not standardized throughout the country and many variations on this basic design can be found.

The primary goal of a clinical path is to serve as a point-of-care reminder of the optimal multidisciplinary plan of care for a group of patients. Once the patient's entire record is computerized and is accessible to all caregivers in all sites of care, the need for a matrix format path may diminish. Point-of-care reminders can be built into the information system.