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, protocols were not being followed, and documentation varied by site
- 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 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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References