Quality Improvement: A Quality Care Audit Toolkit for Respiratory and Sleep Physiology Services

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Aim

Fundamentally there is always a need to evaluate services and ensure they are performing to an acceptable level for patient safety and care. As part of a quality improvement project, I devised a quality care audit toolkit for the Children’s Respiratory and Sleep Physiology service at The Royal London Children’s Hospital, Barts Health NHS.

The Quality Care Audit Toolkit incorporated standards from the Care Quality Commission (CQC) (safe, effective, caring, responsive, and well-led), Department of Health and Association of Respiratory and Technology Physiology (ARTP).

In May 2007, the Department of Health stated that all physiological measurement services must:

- Be patient-centred
- Be accessible to patients in convenient locations
- Be clinically effective and cost effective
- Realise the benefits of new technology
- Sustain 18 weeks referral to treatment patient pathways
- Contribute to the provision of the most effective treatment for patients by detecting disease earlier
- Support the best possible patient experience by providing excellent patient information

The aim of the toolkit was to identify and support the service to ensure these quality standards are met and compliance is monitored.

Method

The methodologies used for the audit was the plan-do-study-act (PDSA) cycle and lean strategy; ultimately looking at providing a high quality service that is sustainable.

The audit evaluated each pathway of the service, including all diagnostic testing to staff development.

Conclusion

The toolkit was seen as an opportunity to recognise good practice and identify areas that need to be further developed, in order to improve the respiratory service provided and enhance positive patient experience.

Many changes have been implemented within the service since the completion of the audit, which included various cost-effective measures, which not only enhanced clinical effectiveness, but also promoted environmental sustainability.
To ensure quality care is maintained, it is the responsibility of the service and organisation providing respiratory care to implement, evaluate and audit these standards.