

Patient Safety: Client Checklist

Description:

This tool provides an overview of a culture of safety, a Client Safety Checklist and a Client Medication Record.

How it can be used:

'Healthy' and safe health systems recognize that patients, residents, clients, and their families can be supported as active partners in their care. Help ensure that clients of your health centre have safer patient experiences by providing them with the Client Checklist and Client Medication Record to guide them in being active participants in their health care.

A health system that has a culture of safety has the following characteristics:

The Organization:

- Acknowledges the risk- and error-prone nature of healthcare.
- Aligns organizational structures, processes, goals and rewards with improved safety.
- Is grounded in trust and human rights.
- Learns from errors.
- Shares stories of safety.

The Patients and Clients:

- Access care that is patient- and family-centred.
- Receive comprehensive information about health issues in a form that they can understand, including facts about no treatment and risks, and treatment options and their risks.
- Are provided with open discussions of events which result in unintended harm to them while receiving health care, including those that result from system error or as a complication of their health care management.
- Are encouraged and facilitated to report their safety concerns in a fair and just environment.

The Health Care Providers:

- Support staff to achieve the highest levels of performance.
- Ensure individual and shared acceptance of accountability for the safe delivery of quality care, risk reduction, and care outcomes in a systems-based approach.
- Encourage and facilitate reporting and open communication about safety concerns in a fair and just environment.

Client Checklist

1. Be an active member of your health care team.
 - a. Get involved in every decision about your health care. Research shows that patients who are more involved with their care get better results.
 - b. If you have concerns or do not understand some aspect of your care while in a health facility, ask questions.
2. Learn about your condition and treatments by asking the health care providers involved in your care, and by consulting reliable sources.
 - a. Ask questions if you need more information or do not understand something.
 - b. Make a list of questions before you meet with your health care provider or team, and write down the answers.

- c. Tell your health care provider the information in your own words to make sure you understand and can make an informed decision about your care.
 - d. Ask your health care provider for the results of your tests and procedures.
3. Keep a record or journal of your medical history.
 - a. Past and present health conditions and any surgeries.
 - b. Your immunization and vaccination history.
 - c. All of your food, environment and medicine allergies and associated symptoms.
 - d. Your height and weight.
 - e. A list of your health care providers' names and phone numbers.
4. Keep a record of all your medication details.
 - a. Whenever you start a new medication, be sure to add it to your record.
 - b. Write down the reason and date you started taking the medicine, and the times you must take it during the day.
 - c. If you stop taking a medication, write down the date and the reason.
 - d. Record any side effects or allergies you experience with any medication, and what to do if these should occur.
5. Make sure that all of your health care providers know about every medication you are taking.
 - a. Include prescription and over-the-counter medicines, and dietary supplements such as vitamins and herbs.
 - b. At least once a year bring all of your medicines and supplements with you to your health care provider to talk about them and find out if there are any problems.
 - c. Keeping your medication records up-to-date will help ensure you get the best quality care from all your health care providers.
6. Make sure your health care providers know about any allergies and adverse reactions you have had to medicines. This will help you avoid getting a medicine that can harm you.
7. When your health care provider writes a prescription, make sure you can read it. If you cannot read the handwriting, your pharmacist might not be able to either.
8. Ask for information about your medicines in terms you can understand - both when your medicines are prescribed and when you receive them.
 - a. What is the medicine for?
 - b. How am I supposed to take it and for how long?
 - c. What side effects are likely? What do I do if they occur?
 - d. Is this medicine safe to take with other medicines or dietary supplements I am taking?
 - e. What food, drink, or activities should I avoid while taking this medicine?
9. When you pick up your medicine from the pharmacy, make sure you are getting the medicine your health care provider prescribed. A high percentage of medicine errors involve patients being given the wrong drug or the wrong dose.
10. Make sure you understand the directions on your medicine labels.
 - a. Medicine labels can be hard to understand. For example, if the label says "take four doses daily" does this mean one dose every 6 hours around the clock, or just during regular waking hours? Ask your pharmacist to explain.
11. Ask your pharmacist for the best way to measure your liquid medicine.
 - a. Don't assume that your household teaspoons actually hold a true teaspoon.
 - b. Special devices like marked syringes can help you to measure the right dose. But always make sure you know how to use the device.
12. Make sure the information on your identification bracelet is correct.

- a. Although errors on patient bracelets are uncommon, it is easy to check and well worth the effort. Even a simple error can potentially have serious consequences.
13. Make sure the medications you receive in hospital are the same as those you take at home (if relevant).
14. While you are in hospital, wash your hands and ask everyone who has direct contact with you whether they have washed their hands.
- a. This includes health care staff and any visitors you may have.
 - b. Hand washing is an important way to prevent the spread of infections in hospitals. A study found that when patients checked whether health care workers washed their hands, the workers washed their hands more often and used more soap.
15. Question anything that does not make sense to you or that seems unusual.
- a. Report any changes in your condition to your health care provider as soon as you can, regardless of how insignificant they may seem.
16. When you are being discharged from a health facility, ask your health care provider to explain the treatment plan you should follow at home.
- a. This includes information about your medicines and finding out when you can get back to your regular activities.
17. Make sure that all health care providers involved in your care have important health information about you. Do not assume that everyone knows everything they need to know about you and your condition.

CLIENT MEDICATION RECORD

Name: _____

Care Providers (name and number):_____

Last reviewed (date and with whom):_____

Birthdate: _____

Height and weight: _____

Allergies and responses: _____

Name of medication (brand and generic)	Date started	Reason for taking	Amount and time it is taken	Date stopped	Effects or issues