

Measuring the Units

An audit of alcohol documentation in patients

AIM

NCEPOD (National Confidential Enquiry into Patient Outcome and Death) published "Measuring the Units" in June 2013:

- All patients presenting to hospital services should be screened for alcohol misuse. An alcohol history indicating the number of units drunk weekly, drinking patterns, recent drinking behaviour, time of last drink, indicators of dependence and risk of withdrawal should be documented.
Within Southport and Ormskirk Hospitals NHS Trust all patients should have an Audit C completed asking them about alcohol consumption.
- All patients presenting to acute services with a history of potentially harmful drinking, should be referred to alcohol support services for a comprehensive physical and mental assessment. The referral and outcomes should be documented in the notes.
Within Southport and Ormskirk Hospitals NHS Trust patients who score over 7 should be referred to the alcohol liaison specialist nurse who will undertake a Severity of Alcohol Dependency Questionnaire (SADQ).

AUDIT METHODOLOGY

Looking at the use of the **Audit C** screening tool and **Severity of Alcohol Dependency Questionnaire**

Initial Audit

- August 2013
- 50 A&E Cards
- 5 sets of notes from each inpatient ward in Southport Hospital
- Total Sample = 109 patients

Reaudit

- January 2014
- 98 CAS Cards (Concentrated on A&E as area needing most improvement)
- 60 notes from inpatient notes
- Total sample = 158 patients

AUDIT C

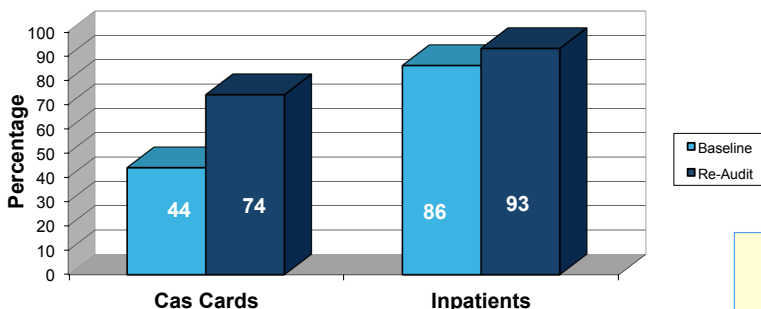
Questions	Scoring system				
	0	1	2	3	4
How often do you have a drink containing alcohol?	Never	Monthly or less	2-4 times per month	2-3 times per week	4+ times per week
How many standard alcoholic drinks do you have on a typical day when you are drinking?	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-9	10+
How often do you have 6 or more standard drinks on one occasion?	Never	Less than monthly	Monthly	Weekly	Daily or almost daily

A total of 7+ indicates increasing or higher risk drinking.
Please refer to Alcohol specialist team on bleep 5376 or ring 5277.



OUTCOME/RESULTS

Has the patient been asked the Audit C questions?



Patients Scoring over 7 and referral to alcohol liaison specialist

	Baseline	Re-Audit
Number of patients scoring over 7	10	34
Number referred to alcohol liaison specialist	7 (70%)	28 (82%)
Number <i>not</i> referred to alcohol liaison specialist	1 (1%)	-
Number refusing referral to alcohol liaison specialist	2 (20%)	6 (18%)

CONCLUSION

Improvement in asking the **Audit C** questions

- 30% increase CAS Cards
- 7% increase Inpatient Notes
- Improved use of the Audit C questions to identify patients with problematic drinking requiring referral to alcohol liaison specialist.
- Increase in the number of patients scoring above 7 who are referred to alcohol liaison specialist

HOW WE MADE THE IMPROVEMENTS

- HALT (Hospital Alcohol Liaison Team) – 5 nurses who are passionate about highlighting the importance of alcohol consumption and subsequent problems.
- Ward level and A&E level training by HALT team to build relationships.
- HALT team approachable and very visible on the wards so nobody forgets!!
- Developed alcohol champions role on each ward.
- Posters on the ward to increase awareness for both staff and patients.
- Showed every area how to use the audit c, and answered any questions.
- Explained what a unit of alcohol is.
- Made it fun by asking staff to complete audit C for themselves, to make it real.
- Alcohol is an issue that everyone has experience with either professionally or personally.



Dr Alan Owens
Mandy Smith
Nicola Taylor
Kirsty Wooldridge
Rebecca Burrows
Kate McCall
Barbara McDaid