Quality Improvement: Implementing a Foot Exam to Improve Care for Patients with Diabetes Mellitus

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Quality Improvement: Implementing a Foot Exam to Improve Care for Patients with Diabetes Mellitus

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Background

• Clarify the problem: nerve conduction studies show up to 50% of youth with diabetes mellitus have peripheral neuropathy (PN)1
• The American Diabetes Association (ADA) guidelines recommend an annual foot exam in patients with type 1 and 2 diabetes who are ≥ 10 years of age and who have been diagnosed with diabetes ≥ 5 years2
• Children’s Mercy Kansas City (CMH) does not have a standard for completing foot exams on our patients with diabetes
• Only 1% of eligible patients presenting to CMH Diabetes Clinics in September 2017 had a foot exam documented

Methods

• Provider Education: Journal club on PN, adult endocrinology colleagues providing on-site training on proper exam technique, and educational handouts & online tutorials for future referencing
• Equipment: Arranged for monofilaments to be available, updated the EHR for easier documentation, and handed out reminder cards for each patient with diabetes
• PDSA Cycles: Assessed these interventions and how they impacted our objective
• Positive Findings: We arranged treatment plans for positive screens including medication management and referral to CMH Neurology
• Data Collection: Foot exam details collected using an automated monthly report from the EHR - Calculated percentage of patients who had documented foot exam on monthly basis
• Collected provider names associated with each patient visit to help facilitate accountability in performing the foot exams

Results and Follow up

• Check results and process: each month we updated our run chart and distributed it to the Division of Endocrinology/Diabetes showing our progress
• We received feedback at monthly provider meetings regarding the process and in order to identify any barriers to performing or documenting the exam
• We used “just in time” feedback to influence clinic processes, check monofilament supplies, and identify possible barriers

Discussion

• Quality improvement tools were utilized to improve the care provided to our patients with diabetes by implementing an annual foot exam
• After our interventions, we increased the eligible patients receiving the diabetic foot exam to 68%
• Next steps include increasing compliance with performing the exams and focusing on sustainability long-term as the exam increases provider work load

References