Medication prescriptions and suicide prevention policies in the Flemish mental healthcare, two quality indicators in the domain of patient safety

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Context

In December 2012, the Flemish Quality Indicator Project for Mental Healthcare was launched in collaboration with mental healthcare organisations, professionals, patients and the Flemish government. The objective is to develop relevant, meaningful and well-defined quality indicators (QI).

By the end of 2013 two QI’s had been defined in the domain of patient safety; (1) the presence of a suicide prevention policy and (2) complete medication prescriptions.

Intervention

In order to reach consensus mental healthcare organisations, professionals, patient and family organisations were invited to participate in the development of quality indicators in the domain of patient safety.

Based on feasibility, relevance and acceptance, two QI’s were selected for a validation study. The first indicator is a structure indicator that measures the presence of a suicide prevention policy. The second indicator is a process indicator which measures the ratio of complete medication prescriptions.

QI’s in the domain of patient safety

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Mental healthcare organisations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The presence of a suicide prevention</td>
<td>10 items will be checked to measure the presence of a suicide prevention</td>
<td>External audit by peers</td>
<td>Psychiatric &amp; acute care hospitals, ambulant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>policy</td>
<td>policy in mental healthcare organisations</td>
<td></td>
<td>services, sheltered living organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete medication prescriptions</td>
<td>10 items on each prescription will be checked to measure the ratio of</td>
<td>Internal audit by hospital</td>
<td>Psychiatric &amp; acute care hospitals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>complete medication prescriptions</td>
<td>pharmacists</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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Results of a first proof-of-concept measurement

- The development of these indicators is a result of collaboration between mental healthcare organisation, professionals and patient organisations.
- These indicators have been tested in a first “proof-of-concept” measurement and will be validated by the end of 2015.
- These two relevant QI’s in the domain of patient safety are a first step in the development of a set well-defined quality indicators in Flemish mental healthcare.

Lessons learnt

- Involving mental healthcare organisations, professionals and patients in developing relevant, meaningful and well-defined QI’s is possible and has proven to be successful.
- This approach stimulates mental healthcare organisations and professionals to work with quality indicators and should finally result in a gradual improvement of the quality of care.