

[P-149R] Barcode medication administration (BCMA): quality management and medication error evaluation following implementation

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Barcode medication administration (BCMA) is a national Veterans Healthcare Administration (VHA) initiative to improve patient safety and reduce medication errors that result from transcription and medication administration. The process is to scan the patient's barcoded wristband, which opens the medication administration record or virtual do list (VDL), scan the barcoded medications, resulting in computer documentation of correct medication, dose and time, and finally, administer the medication to the patient. In April 2000, the Cincinnati VA Medical Center (VAMC) implemented BCMA on 2 medical/surgical units with the intention of evaluating the equipment, software and process before rolling out throughout the facility. As with any new process that requires the integration of new computer software, equipment, individuals from different health care professions, and multiple divisions, it is essential to monitor for adverse events and errors during the implementation process and adjust accordingly. Therefore, a multidisciplinary team at the Cincinnati VAMC will evaluate medication errors, virtual drug utilization evaluation (DUE) list errors, missed medication reports, variation reports and quality assurance monitors to determine 3 objectives. First, whether the process for implementation of BCMA software is a safe and effective approach for our facility will be determined. Second, the impact of different pieces of equipment on the utilization of BCMA and the cause of medication errors will be assessed. Finally, a summary of process changes and perspective in implementation that occurred prior to implementation on additional units will be evaluated.