

Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living (MHSAL) supports reporting and learning from patient safety events. The focus of a patient safety review is to closely look at the health care system that surrounds and interacts with those giving and receiving care. The goal is to identify risks to patient safety and recommend the most effective ways to minimize risk and improve the delivery of healthcare.

Patient Safety Learning Advisory

Gaps in Wound Care Services in Home Care Environment

Summary:

A home care client was receiving wound care to their feet. The client had underlying peripheral vascular disease. The client was seen by a physician and receiving antibiotics for the treatment of cellulitis. The client's toes of one foot were found to be purple in color when their legs were in a dependent position.

Despite antibiotics, the circulation to the client's feet and the status of the wounds continued to deteriorate. At the time of physician follow-up, the toes were gangrenous and a below knee amputation was required.

Keywords: wound care, peripheral artery disease

This review is based on a single event

Findings of the Review:

Wound assessment tools and available resources such as the Braden scale for predicting pressure ulcer risk were not used.

A comprehensive wound assessment, documentation regarding the wound status and the development of an individualized care plan to address the causes of the wound and appropriate interventions were incomplete.

Implementation of standardized documentation of the client's skin and wound care utilizing the wound assessment and treatment flow sheet along with a wound care

referral for assessment when wound showed no evidence of healing was also not completed.

The Skin and Wound Care Management Guideline for Home Care Policy, Home Care Information Transfer Policy, Nursing Shift Handover Template, and Regional Health Authority Transfer/Referral Form were not utilized to facilitate sharing of relevant client information.

System Learning:

Direct service providers and case coordinators within the Home Care Program require regional wound care education that includes appropriate wound care policies and documentation requirements.

Develop and implement a nursing policy reference guide, including a list of recommended wound care tools, appropriate for various clinical situations.

Establish communication vehicles (monthly teleconferences and a SharePoint page) to highlight new program information.

Include the Wound Care Assessment flowsheet in the Case Coordinator pre-assembled client files to increase completion rates.

Review the Home Care Information Transfer Policy to ensure communication of relevant client information at care transitions.

Date of Posting: February 2018