Sepsis in Primary Care: Recognition, Response and Referral using NEWS

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AIM

To improve sepsis recognition, response and referral in the OOH period using the NHS NEWS app.

Sepsis kills 37,000 people a year in the UK. It can be difficult to recognise and early treatment has shown to improve survival. Sepsis 6 is a recent example of a hospital based care bundle approach that has been proven to reduce mortality. There are a number of different early warning scoring systems available such as MEWS, NEWS, PREAMBLE, and the Sepsis Toolkit. This can make it difficult for the primary care physician to standardise the quality of patient care. We sought to establish a small workgroup of GPs to use a single, national and validated scoring system – NEWS. This has been validated for use in the pre-hospital setting. We used PDSA cycles of change to establish a working guidance plan for using the system in practice.

Method

Baseline data was collected on GPs measurement of clinical parameters on a random sample of 20 cases (see Figure 1). GP educational meeting was used to outline the proposal. Approximately 8 GPs agreed to test using the NEWS app on all admissions and submit data weekly for 8 weeks then monthly thereafter. We developed a care bundle. We agreed by consensus what a policy for the use of the NEWS app would look like with the ability to use PDSA cycles of change to test and improve.

Results

Process Change

Care bundle is
1. Has the clinician calculated a NEWS score on the admission?
2. Has the score been communicated to hospital?
3. Have antibiotics been given if no contraindications and sepsis suspected?
4. Has ambulance transfer been arranged appropriate to the NEWS score?

Achievements

With the considerable help of a small group of enthusiastic GPs we have developed a standardised framework for using NEWS. We have already got patient stories of how the care has been improved. It acts as a great prompt for clinicians to recognise and treat sepsis.

Next steps

• Does using NEWS app prompt clinicians to treat sepsis?
• Retrospectively look at how this has changed individual prescribing habits
• More user feedback.

Conclusions

Early days for data conclusions. Some great examples so far of NEWS scores making a difference to patient care and some great examples of pre-hospital sepsis treatment.

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Key Reference Materials


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