

New Technologies for Nursing, Medication Administration and Documentation

The lecture presented by Mr. Masciantonio, RN, BSN, MDiv. Reflected the changes the computer has brought to the tools available to nursing staff within the Veterans Administration Hospitals. The information showed how since 1999 the implementation of the electronic patient record has resulted in improved patient safety, made individual patient files readily available to staff from any computer including home based data when using the proper security systems and maintaining required security access. A secondary development from the electronic process was the initiation of the BCMA program (Bar Code Medication Administration). This program is a closed program of provider writing orders into the electronic record, pharmacy completing the orders called finishing and the nurse verifying the order. When this is completed the patient id can be scanned into the system, medications scanned for the 5 rights and then administered to the patient. The nurse can then add comments, vital signs or other documentation, close the record and all information is immediately entered into the patient chart/record with signature. This practice reduced reported medication errors by 42% in the first year of implementation. The number of errors has continually decreased ever since. Though there is always room for improvement the benefits of these developments has moved the VA nationally to a leader in patient satisfaction and safety. New technologies continue to emerge, be adapted to the medical and healing professions and nurses have stepped to the forefront of their use.