Purpose

To outline the process by which transplant patients and their families are educated about all aspects of transplantation in order to optimize the success of the transplant experience.

Policy

The goal of patient education at Maine Medical Center is to provide patients and their families with the information they need to actively participate in their health care management and help them make the decision to pursue transplantation, complete workup and develop the necessary skills to care for themselves upon discharge from the hospital after transplantation. Promoting health, empowering the patient with support services, and involving the patient and family in care decisions will improve patient outcomes. Patient education is a multidisciplinary process at Maine Medical Center.

Procedures

1. The patient education process is a collaborative effort that includes assessment, readiness to learn, identification of goals, and implementation of the self-medication program. The process is ongoing, beginning at the time of the initial evaluation and extends throughout the waitlisting period, hospitalization for transplantation and beyond.

2. A multidisciplinary team approach is used to formulate and implement individualized patient education program goals and plans (see “Multidisciplinary Team Care Planning” policy). When the patient demonstrates readiness to learn, the self-medication program is initiated and evaluated daily by the interdisciplinary team.

3. Information about the discharge plan is communicated to the patient daily, as well as the team responsible for the continuum of care.

A. Assessment

Besides assessing the patients/families learning strengths, abilities, preferences, needs, and readiness to learn, the following items should be taken into consideration as appropriate when planning a patient education intervention:

1. Cultural, social and religious beliefs
2. Emotional barriers
3. Desire and motivation to learn
4. Physical and cognitive barriers, including learning disabilities
5. Language/communication barriers (please see hospital policies on interpreter services and communication with patients who are visually impaired, or hard of hearing)
6. Financial limitations
7. Patient needs or preferences
B. Identification of Goals and Educational Plan

To increase the likelihood that patients and their families will follow their plan of care, they must be involved in the identification of their educational goals and be encouraged to participate in decision making.

C. Implementation

1. Plan

The goal of the educational plan and pathway is to improve patients'/significant others' understanding of their treatment options. The plan should maximize self-care skills and promote a healthy lifestyle. Information is provided to the patient regarding responsibility for their care (see Transplant Pathway: "Things to do the first 2 weeks following transplant").

Patient/family instruction includes, but is not limited to:

a. Plan of care, treatment and services
b. Safe and effective use of medical equipment or supplies
c. Nutritional modifications and oral health
d. Rehabilitation and techniques to promote independence as appropriate
e. Pain management, including the importance of effective and complementary therapies
f. Community and patient education resources
g. When and how to obtain follow up care
h. Basic health maintenance and safety
i. Personal grooming and safety
j. Use of immunosuppressive agents, risk of drug interactions and importance of medication adherence long-term.

2. Process

Information is presented in a manner that is tailored to the patients' learning style and needs. This means that a variety of methods and resources are utilized to meet the patients' learning needs. To be successful, the process is dynamic and interactive (please see Interpreter Services and Communication with Patients who are Visually Impaired, or Hard of Hearing).

3. Resources

Many resources are available to prepare patients to care for themselves after they leave the hospital. Written information, booklets and the Transplant Diary are available. Materials are reviewed on a regular basis by the transplant team for content validity.

4. Evaluation/Documentation
Evaluation is a continual process that:

a. Measures the extent to which patients/families have achieved the stated outcome of the program.

b. Indicates where there is a need for review.

Documentation of patient teaching will appear in the patient’s record. The following information must be addressed:

a. Learner assessment
b. When teaching occurred
c. Patient response to teaching
d. Materials used
e. Plan for follow-up if goal not achieved by discharge
f. Signatures

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Date

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