

The Efficacy of a Sticker Program in Reducing Inappropriate Use of Parenteral Nutrition

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Parenteral nutrition (PN) improves nutritional status in severely malnourished patients requiring specialized nutrition support, who cannot meet their needs enterally. It is costly and increases risks for serious complications so it should only be used as indicated by the American Society of Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition (A.S.P.E.N.) guidelines. At the Medical University of South Carolina, a nutrition support team (NST) was formed to prospectively monitor all inpatient adult PN cases and place stickers in the charts of patients deemed inappropriate according to A.S.P.E.N. guidelines. The medical team was asked to respond to the stickers and provide reasoning for their chosen plan of care. The purposes of this study are to gain further insight into the characteristics of patients who receive inappropriate PN, to evaluate the response of the medical team to this intervention and test the efficacy of the sticker program in reducing the percent of avoidable PN patients who are discharged while still receiving PN. The NST found 77 avoidable cases in six months. Twenty-five percent of them were on PN after discharge. Pancreatitis and poor intake by mouth were the leading PN diagnoses. Forty-three percent were candidates for enteral or oral feeds. Three quarters of the stickers received no response from the medical team. This study provides evidence that sticker placement in charts is not an effective way to elicit a response from the medical team. This method may be effective to decrease avoidable PN use if coupled with other interventions.