
Clinical transformation update

Computerized physician order entry (CPOE) is a hot topic in hospitals nationwide, as increasing evidence suggests that CPOE helps reduce medical errors and improves health care quality and efficiency. CPOE is simply the process of entering physician orders electronically. Basic CPOE ensures standardized, legible, and complete orders in a standard format.

Research suggests that CPOE implementation in all urban hospitals in the USA could prevent as many as 907,600 serious medication errors each year (1). Studies have also shown that CPOE reduces length of stay; reduces duplication of tests; reduces turnaround times for laboratory, pharmacy, and radiology requests; and delivers cost savings.

Baylor Health Care System (BHCS) understands that the physician's most valuable commodity is time and is working to ensure that any new technology introduced into physician workflow reduces hassles and wasted time. In other words, efforts to improve patient safety and benefit the hospital system must take into account any new technology's impact on physician efficiency.

As part of its clinical transformation project, BHCS is implementing an electronic health record driven by CPOE. BHCS embraces health care delivery that is safe, timely, effective, efficient, equitable, and patient centered (STEEEP™), and the electronic health record is the principal enabling technology for delivery of STEEEP care.

Successful implementation of CPOE involves developing and continually updating evidence-based protocols, pathways,

and other clinical documents such as order sets. These clinical documents support efficient physician workflow and are another example of how BHCS is investing in a system approach to patient care. Over 15 evidence-based order sets are currently available for systemwide use on the Physician Portal, myBaylorEMR. The order sets have been developed by fellow Baylor physicians and clinicians with special interest in efficiency and evidence-based care. These tools represent examples of Baylor's investment in supporting physicians with clinical tools that furnish evidence-based diagnostic and treatment options at the point of care.

Standardized order sets can streamline the delivery of care, allowing for more time at the bedside for physicians and other clinicians. The order sets currently available for use on paper (printed from the Physician Portal) will be "rendered" in the new CPOE system, making the transition to that system more intuitive for physicians and less disruptive to their workflow.

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1. Birkmeyer JD. *The Leapfrog Group's Patient Safety Practices, 2003: The Potential Benefits of Universal Adoption*. Washington, DC: The Leapfrog Group, February 2004.