

Lecture Notes:

Introduction to Integrated Care Pathways (ICPs)

by Robin Beaumont Date: 04/02/2000
e-mail: <mailto:robin@robinbt2.free-online.co.uk>

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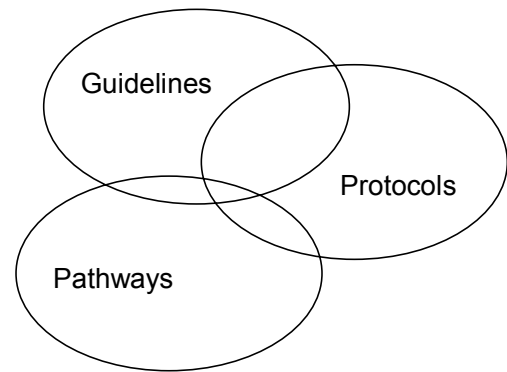
Important Note:

This document should be read in conjunction with the examples of care pathways provided on the main web site:

<http://www.robinbt2.free-online.co.uk/virtualclassroom/contents.htm>

1. What is a care pathway?

Care Pathways = A form of documentation
 Nursing + Medical orders + +



Usually contain three components:

Events	Time	Comment (exceptions)
Initial Contact		
1st OPD Appt		
Admission		
Discharge		
Follow-up		
Final Discharge (Adapted from Brown J, Simpson L 1994 Co-ordinating patient care. Friarage Hospital Northallerton)		

Events may be divided up into categories such as Nursing, specimens/tests, teaching etc. etc.

Time may be just a sequence of events (e.g. as in a day case procedure) or an actual time period such as minutes (e.g. A&E) or days (e.g. ward based care).

The **comments** are usually to report deviations from the path ('**exception reporting**'). These are usually provided with codes to facilitate analysis and computer data entry. Once again the codes may be divided up into categories such as Patient/family, Clinician, Hospital, Community (e.g. bed/transport availability). A separate **variance sheet** may be kept documenting where in the path each variance occurred, Problem code, Action(s) and signature.

2. Scope of a Care pathway

The care pathway may only be developed for a individual specialty or be Multidisciplinary (Integrated Care Pathway **ICP**). It may encompass only part of the total treatment plan such as a assessment in psychiatry or, as in the case of an elective Hip replacement, may commence at the pre-hospital outpatient visit and end with the community nurse removing the stitches. The time span they cover can vary considerably, within the ITU/ICU situation care pathways can be developed on a individual basis for the following 24 period or even shorter time spans.

Basically a Care Pathway can answer the following questions:

Who does what?

When it is done?

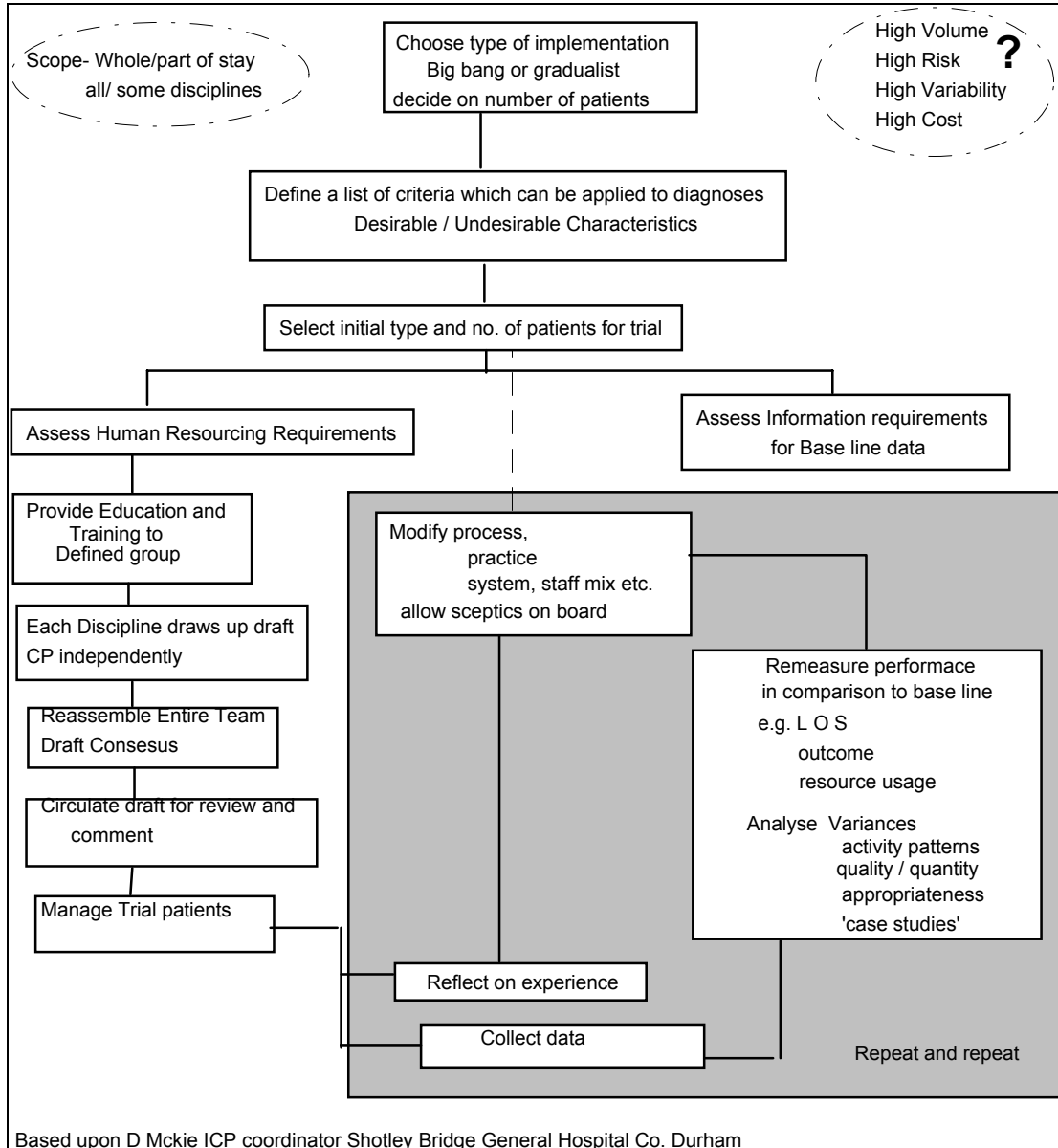
Where was it done

How much did it cost?

Why was it not done?

3. How do you develop a care pathway?

Many methods exist and a search on the Web (04/02/2000) listed over a dozen books on the subject. Johnson 1997 'Pathways of care' (UK) and Wall & Proyect 1997 in 'Moving from Parameters to Pathways : A Guide for Developing and Implementing Critical Pathways' provide full details. The second book presents a research based approach while Johnson is more pragmatic. Below shows the method adopted at Shotley Bridge Hospital Co Durham UK in 1994 for developing a care pathway for elective hip replacement.



4. Why develop Care Pathways?

There have been numerous reasons put forward for the development of care pathways. Most research fails to demonstrate conclusively if they reduce cost or increase efficiency. At a more pragmatic level those involved in developing / using care pathways find they:

Enhance communication between health care workers and patients. In the USA some hospitals provide patients with Care pathways to show them the projected recovery course.

Easy to use. Because they tend to be developed specifically for each site they are easy to use. If there is a problem this is picked up in the on going variance analysis and the care pathway modified accordingly.

Reduce Paperwork Exception reporting reduces the paperwork tremendously.

Provide Bottom up financial information The care pathway provides the opportunity for bottom up costing analysis from the data without any additional activities. This is a rare but very important aspect.

Facilitate Medical Audit The continuing analysis of data, both process and outcome orientated, encourages a culture of audit.

Facilitate Teaching Students can see the projected course of events easily.

Enhance quality of care? By incorporating aspects of EBM they can provide the best possible care?

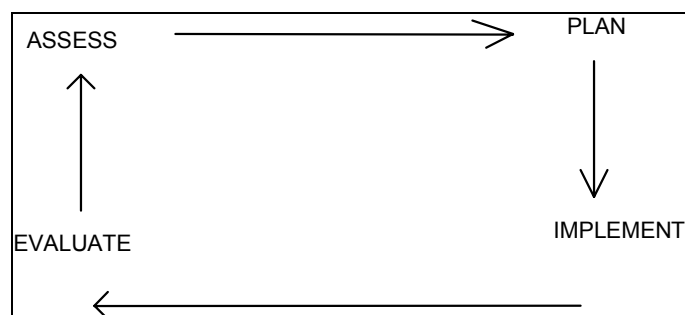
Exercise:

Time allocated: 30 minutes **Tasks:**

- 1 Choose a presenter and illustrator.
- 2 Choose a group of patients or a condition which you think may be suitable for the care pathway approach. Also specify what made you choose that particular condition or group of patients?
- 3 List the main events, for the chosen group, during their experience with health care professionals
- 4 Prepare the presentation.

5. Care pathways viewed from a Care Plan perspective

The stages in the care plan approach are shown below:



Considering each of these stages in turn we can consider how they relate to the care plan approach.

Assessment Care Pathways provide assessment of their suitability at both the group level and the individual level (inclusion criteria). It can be argued that 'individual' requirements may be disregarded but this is not strictly true as care pathways can be adapted to incorporate them.

Planning The planning process for a pathway is far more rigorous and valid than a ad hoc individual Nursing assessment. There is far less risk of forgetting important aspects of management details such as (stitch/drain removal or educational objectives)

Implementation This is the same as carrying out the care pathway.

Evaluation While the care planning approach does not provide a easy method of evaluating a group of patients experiences without additional data collection Care pathways provide in-built techniques of evaluation by way of 'Variance analysis'.

The chart below summaries the above:

<p>Assessment = Two levels of need:</p> <p><i>1. Core</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stable over time • Stable over patients • Can be predefined - build into care pathway <p><i>2. Individual</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rapidly changing? • Individual to specific patients • Can not be predefined NOT build into 'core' care pathway <p>When / how often?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core needs - over groups of patients • Individual needs - defined by situation <p>'Mini assessments' - before carrying out each task associated with an event.</p>	<p>Planning ('To meet needs')</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What? • When? • Who?
<p>Implementation:</p> <p>Support - Human resourcing, Technologies</p>	<p>Evaluation:</p> <p>Define Aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • Individual and / or groups • • Audit / research etc. <p>Define Support - Human resourcing, Technologies</p>

Exercise two

Time allocated: 30 minutes

Tasks:

- 1 Choose a presenter and illustrator.
- 2 From the list of main events identified in the previous group activity identify possible assessment and evaluation criteria for each of them.
- 3 List a few codes that might be used to record variances.
- 3 Prepare the presentation.

6. References and Contacts

Please see separate document on main web site:

<http://www.robinbt2.free-online.co.uk/virtualclassroom/contents.htm>

Document info:

Robin Beaumont 06/02/00 Tel:0191 2731150 e-mail: robin@robinbt2.free-online.co.uk Source: Laptop; C:\HIcourseweb new\chap11\s7\NOTES1.DOC