

IMPLEMENTATION OF A CLINICAL CARE PATHWAY FOR LATEX ALLERGY IN GHENT UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL (BELGIUM)

Background

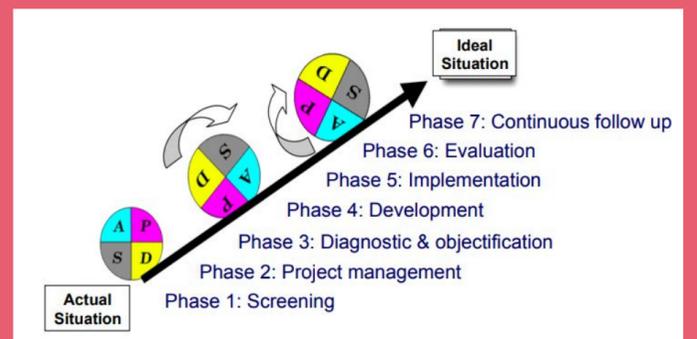
- Latex allergy is defined as an immediate IgE mediated reaction to latex products (e.g. balloons, gloves, condoms, surgical catheters). Symptoms include contact urticaria, rhinoconjunctivitis, shortness of breath and anaphylaxis.
- In 2015 about 3.4 million people were employed as nursing professionals and 1.8 million as physicians in Europe. While there are no overall statistics on the prevalence of latex allergy in that work force, studies do indicate that up to 9.7% of health care workers are latex allergic, compared to 7.2% of patients.
- The key to managing latex allergy in healthcare professionals and patients lies in correct recognition and appropriate action

Aim

The purpose of the clinical care pathway for latex allergy was to provide all staff at Ghent University Hospital with appropriate knowledge and skills to identify and manage patients who have a known latex allergy or those at risk of developing latex allergy.

Method

Based on the experience of the Belgian Dutch Pathway Network, a 7-phase method to develop, implement, evaluate and continuously follow up a care pathway for latex allergy was designed and implemented. A multidisciplinary team (nurses and physicians of different disciplines, pharmacists) worked together to realise this project.



Results

Following the 7 phase method the following instruments were developed:

1. A flowchart depicting the clinical path in case of latex allergy.
2. Short key questions to screen for latex allergy in admitted patients.
3. Identification of latex allergic patients using an allergy card, specific in-hospital bracelet and notification in electronic patient file
4. Specific guidelines on creating a safe latex free environment for latex allergic patients
5. Flyers, posters on latex allergy.

These instruments were summarized in a global document on latex allergy which was made available in a web application. In this way, all relevant information on latex allergy is transparent and easy accessible for all employees in our hospital.

Awareness about the clinical care pathway was created by means of a symposium.

Evaluation of the pathway is planned in the future.



Conclusion

- This method can offer support to multidisciplinary teams (re)designing and implementing safe, efficient, effective, person-centered, timely, equitable, continuous and integrated care processes. However, the method is no guarantee to success.
- The key to success is the collaboration and critical attitude of the entire multidisciplinary team when implementing pathways.
- The objective of the development of care pathways is to optimise patient and health care professionals' safety and to improve health care quality

Contact

Hilde.lapeere@ugent.be
T +32 9 332 59 17
C. Heymanslaan 10, B 9000 Ghent (Belgium)

Patricia.oosterlinck@uzgent.be
T +32 9 332 67 08