

Another Step to Improve Patient Safety

Hospital Happenings – November 2011

Montrose Memorial Hospital has taken big steps over the past few months to enhance our patients' safety during hospitalization using the latest technology available. In October and November, we implemented a Bedside Medication Verification System which works similar to the bar code scanning system at the grocery stores. The wrist band our patients wear during their hospitalization now includes a bar code with a unique identifying code. When a medication is ordered for the patient, the pharmacy enters the medication order. When the nurse administers the medication to the patient, they will first scan the patient's wrist band and then the drug to make sure they match the medication order. This scan confirms that it is the right patient, the right medication, the right dose and that it's being given at the right time. If there are any errors – an alert is given to the nurse and they won't be able to continue until the error message is investigated.

All of this medication information will be stored in the Electronic Medication Administration Record and it becomes part of your medical record. Your physician will be able to review each dose you receive. Our nursing and technology staff members have participated in extensive training sessions to learn the system which will continually improve the standard of care for our patients.

In addition to the Bedside Medication Verification, Montrose Memorial Hospital was one of the first rural hospitals in Colorado to successfully attest to the Medicare Incentive Program as a Meaningful User of our Electronic Health Record. What exactly does that mean? As defined by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services; "Meaningful Use, which comes from The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, specifies three main components; 1) The use of a certified Electronic Health Record in a meaningful manner, such as electronic prescribing, 2) The use of certified Electronic Health Record technology for electronic exchange of health information to improve quality of health care, and 3) The use of certified Electronic Health Record technology to submit clinical quality and other measures. Simply put, "meaningful use" means providers need to show they're using technology in ways that can be measured significantly in quality and in quantity.

We have been working hard to implement electronic systems that make activities more streamlined for our care providers and safer for our patients. By being the first rural hospital in Colorado to confirm that we are putting our systems in place, it shows our commitment to quality patient care.

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