



Standardizing Anxiety Assessment Documentation to Improve Consistency and Quality in Chronic Pain Management

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Background

Anxiety is a common comorbidity in chronic pain patients and can significantly affect their treatment outcomes. Variability in documenting anxiety assessments can lead to inconsistent care and suboptimal management of anxiety. This quality improvement (QI) project aims to standardize anxiety assessment documentation across a pain management clinic.

Objective

To improve the consistency and quality of anxiety assessment documentation by implementing a standardized anxiety assessment tool and training program for healthcare providers

Methods

This QI project was conducted over a three-month period at a pain management clinic. A standardized anxiety assessment tool, the Generalized Anxiety Disorder 7-item (GAD-7) scale, was introduced for all patient interactions. Healthcare providers received training on the importance of consistent anxiety assessment and proper documentation practices. The consistency and completeness of anxiety assessment documentation were evaluated through random chart audits conducted before and after the intervention.

Impact of Standardizing Anxiety Assessment Documentation on Consistency and Completeness

Metric	Pre-Intervention	Post-Intervention
Documentation Rate (%)	55%	90%
Completeness Score (out of 5)	2.5	4.5

Keywords:

Chronic Pain, Anxiety Assessment, Documentation, Quality Improvement, Standardization, GAD-7 Scale

Results

Before the implementation of the standardized tool, chart audits revealed that only 55% of patient records included a documented anxiety assessment, with significant variability in the tools used. Following the intervention, the documentation rate improved to 90%, with all records using the GAD-7 scale. Additionally, the completeness of anxiety assessments, including details on anxiety severity and its impact on daily activities, showed a significant improvement.

Conclusion

Implementing a standardized anxiety assessment tool and training program significantly improved the consistency and quality of anxiety assessment documentation in the clinic. This QI initiative underscores the importance of standardization in clinical practices to enhance patient care. Future efforts will focus on maintaining high compliance rates and evaluating the impact of improved documentation on patient outcomes and anxiety management.

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