

Improving the efficiency of catheterisation and reducing delays to patient care in a district general hospital

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Introduction

Catheterisation is a common procedure required for the monitoring of acutely unwell patients. Most emergency departments have equipment trolleys for a number of procedural skills including catheterisation; however other departments, including the acute medical unit, do not follow suit despite the acuity of some patients' conditions. Without accurate monitoring, the severity of a patient's condition or their deterioration may not be recognised or appreciated as early as it could be possible.

Methods

This complete cycle project started with an initial questionnaire sent out to all clinical staff working on the acute medical unit to gauge the scale of the problem. This resulted in the introduction of a catheter equipment trolley to the acute medical unit, which included all the required equipment, documentation

and a restocking list. A second questionnaire was then sent out following a number of months of use to assess the impact of the catheterisation trolley.

Results

There were 26 respondents to the initial questionnaire spanning various roles within the multidisciplinary team. The initial questionnaire found that 92% of staff members (both rotational and permanent staff) found the process of locating catheterisation equipment time-consuming and 64% felt that patient care was being directly impacted upon and delayed due to the difficulties in locating the equipment.

Following the introduction of the catheterisation trolley, a repeat questionnaire found that 85% of respondents felt that this positively impacted upon the time to catheterisation and reduced delays to patient care.

Conclusions

Overall, the equipment trolley is a successful addition to the ward. As a relatively simple measure, these positive findings give scope for this to be expanded to further departments and procedures. ■

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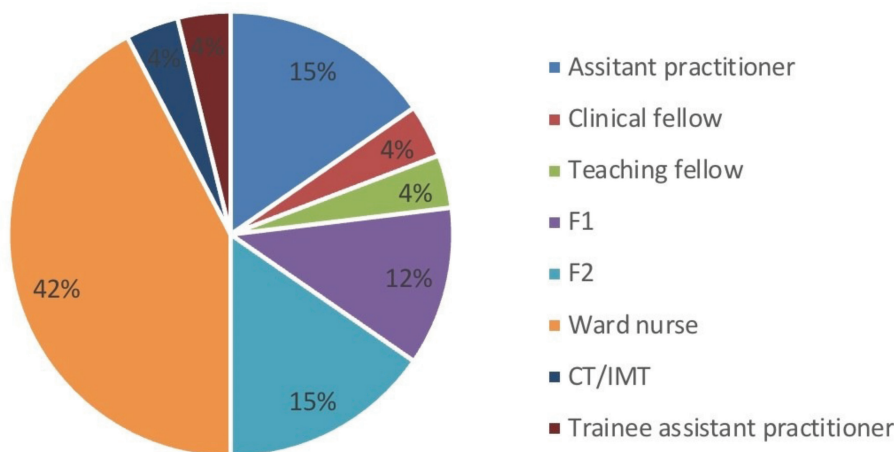


Fig 1. Role of those completing the questionnaire.