

Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living (MHSAL) supports reporting and learning from patient safety events. The focus of a patient safety review is to closely look at the health care system that surrounds and interacts with those giving and receiving care. The goal is to identify risks to patient safety and recommend the most effective ways to minimize risk and improve the delivery of healthcare.

Patient Safety Learning Advisory

Failure to Change Treatment Plan Following Critical Test Result

Summary:

A patient presented to the Emergency Department following a febrile seizure. Blood cultures were obtained. The patient was discharged before the blood culture results were available.

The blood culture results were critical in nature. This result was not followed up with the patient nor was the treatment plan changed.

A few days later, the patient was admitted to another hospital. At this time, the critical results of the blood culture collected a few days earlier was recognized.

The patient was transferred to a tertiary care site for modified antibiotic therapy for treatment of Methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA).

Keywords: critical laboratory result

Device Name (if applicable):

Drug/Name/Fluid Name: (if applicable):

Type of Analysis: single event

Findings of the Review:

- There was no documented process for communicating critical lab results for discharged patients.
- The availability of a computerized medical record that includes patient medical information including laboratory and diagnostic results ordered at different health facilities may have provided earlier recognition of the critical laboratory results.
- The reported blood culture result was not identified as critical in nature.

System Learning:

- Develop/implement a policy and procedure for the communication of critical test results to the ordering practitioner when received by PMH staff for follow up with discharged patients.
- Establish e-Chart permissions/access as part of the staff sign-on/orientation process and provide education on these.
- Include test analysis/interpretation on microbiology test results (e.g. 'CRITICAL') to enhance understanding of the significance of the results.
- Educate staff on the need to complete and send an Inter-facility Transfer Referral Form when a patient is transferred or referred to another facility regardless of transportation mode (ambulance, family transportation).
- Provide education about the significance and best practice treatment associated with gram+ cocci test results.

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