

Manitoba Health, Healthy Living & Seniors (MHLS) 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

Summary:

A patient presented to a rural Emergency Department (ED) with redness and swelling to their face associated with a laceration to the face. The patient was diagnosed with angioedema related to a possible insect bite.

Three days later, the patient presented to an urban Walk-In Clinic with an abscess in the affected area. The patient was advised to go to ED for further assessment and treatment.

The same evening the patient presented to ED, spoke with a triage nurse for six minutes and then left the hospital.

About ten hours later, the patient was transported via ambulance from home to a second hospital. The patient was diagnosed with a facial abscess and possible Toxic Shock Syndrome.

Angioedema, abscess, toxic shock syndrome

Device Name (if applicable):

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

Type of Analysis: single event

Topic: Care Management

Findings of the Review

It is an expectation that every person who presents to an ED is assessed by a triage nurse. The triage nurse did not recall seeing this patient nor could a written record of this ED visit be located.

The ED has been congested for several months. Furthermore, the ED was working this shift with single physician coverage at a time when it was identified that two physicians should be working. This was because of a shortage of ED physicians.

Recommendations for Improvement:

Develop a process to document all patients who present at ED triage including those who may leave prior to initiation of electronic documentation.

Review the practice of identifying alternatives to the ED to ensure that it is appropriate and what other available options are available for treatment.

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