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Transfer of urology patients to Beaumont Hospital: a quality assurance study & proforma proposal

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Background: Hundreds of patients are transferred between hospitals in Ireland each year. Key information, including administrative data, past medical history, investigation results and treatments are required for safe transfer of care. This quality improvement initiative sought to streamline and standardise the documentation for inter-hospital transfers to the Urology service in Beaumont Hospital.

Methods: A Plan, Do, Study, Act approach was used. Retrospective case review was carried out for all patients transferred to Beaumont Hospital's Urology service between August and October 2020. Documentation was analysed according to parameters derived from international best practice. These included the presence of a transfer letter, complete medical history, current medications, early warning scores and laboratory investigation and radiological results, were analysed to determine the completeness of the. An online referral portal was created including a standardised proforma in order to improve documentation standards.

Results: Thirty-two patients were transferred during the study period. No transfer letters accompanied 28% of transfers (n=9). Nearly half (43%, n=14) had incomplete medical histories, while a third (n=11) had no COVID status documented. Half of cases (n=16) arrived without complete imaging reports. Reception to the proforma developed for

standardising information for transferred patients has been positive.

Conclusions: Preliminary data showed that transfer documentation to the Beaumont Urology Department were inadequate. This can have an impact on patient care and delay investigations and treatments. Comprehensive transfer documentation can be facilitated with a standardised proforma which provide important clinical information readily in patient charts.

Keywords: Urology; hospital transfer; patient care

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Footnote

Conflicts of Interest: The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

Ethical Statement: The authors are accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.

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