



Engage Your Care Team: A Case Study of Chaplain Charting

Rev. Elizabeth Alders, MDiv, M.S.
 Association of Professional Chaplains
 alders.libby@gmail.com

Outline

- Introduction
- Role of Chaplain on Care Team
- Brief Overview of Chaplain Charting
- Case Study
- Chart Example
- Discussion
- Future of Chaplain Charting

Introduction & Welcome

- Training and Background
 - Master of Divinity (MDiv) at Vanderbilt
 - Residency at Virginia Commonwealth University
 - Internship at Tennessee Valley Health Systems
 - Residency at Virginia Commonwealth University Medical Center

Chaplain and Care Team

- To provide spiritual and emotional support
- Triage patients facing spiritual distress
- Utilize research and literature reviews to inform care of patients
- Types of Chaplains:
 - Intern
 - Resident
 - Board Certified

Chaplain Charting

- Training in Electronic Medical Records (EMR) and Charting is requirement of chaplain training
- No standardization of format
- “Less is more” approach
- Problem/Crisis oriented

Difficulties in Standardizing

- Different levels of acuity
 - Higher acuity typically presents a problem focused format
 - Lower acuity typically presents a human flourishing format
- Training of Chaplains is standard; however EMR is not as standardized
- Different levels of skill between interns, residents, staff, and board certified chaplains

Most Often Used Formats

- Single Line Narrative
- SOAP
- Spiritual Distress Assessment
 - Typically has 4-5 different areas of concern and/or crises
 - Personal faith, social, personal identity,

Case Study (Fictionalized)

- Patient:
 - Adult male (mid 30s)
 - Single
 - Traveling
 - Profession: Information Technology Manager/Consultant
- Presents in the ER with subluxed knee, headache ongoing for a day, and joint pain after an obsta
- Further examination shows bruising and signs of previous wound healing, laxity in joints.

Case Study (con't)

- Lab work is normal
- Imaging has shown that the knee has subluxed
 - Orthopedic surgeon recommends brace and physical therapy first
- Chaplain called because patient expressed frustration and aggravation at having yet another joint injury

Case Study (con't)

- Patient shares with chaplain that his main core of friends are fellow obstacle course racers and that patient is a veteran
- Lifestyle has always been focused on higher-intensity exercise and living healthy
- “I feel like I’m falling apart—I’m 34 but my joints just hurt more and more. And I keep spraining my ankles and knees. Guess I’m paying for participating in a war.”

Case Study (con't)

- Patient shared he is agnostic
- Has had multiple injuries requiring time off from his active lifestyle
 - Reading more—particularly history books and philosophy
 - Taking cooking lessons
 - Not living near biological family

Chaplain Chart

- Presenting Concern:
 - Crisis of Personal Worthiness
 - Sub-concern is that of concern of belonging
- Intervention:
 - Listening Presence
 - Assisted patient in recognizing resources
 - Helped patient reframe situation

Chaplain Chart (Cont)

- Outcome(s)
 - Patient able to express frustration and focus on what's next
 - Encouraged reframing of injuries not as punishment but instead medical concern needing to be addressed
- Plan
 - Coordinate with social work to help patient find transport home and accommodation for travel
 - Follow up with medical team on conversation about joint pain

Questions for Clarification?

Discussion (5+ minutes)

- What parts of the chart note could provide points for data?
- How would you approach analyzing this chart note?
- From a data perspective, what is helpful in the chart note and what could be added?
- What would you as a medical professional like to discuss with the chaplain or read in the chart note?

Future of Chaplain Charting

- The profession moving more toward evidence-based practice
 - Intent is to utilize chart data as performance assessment tool
- Desire to conduct research and not just utilize research
 - Requirement for research experience as well as using research literature is being discussed on national level

Questions?

- My email:
 - alders.libby@gmail.com