

Audit Of The Quality Of Discharge Letters Sent From The Mental Health Liaison Team (MHLT) To General Practitioners

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Introduction

The CORE 24 service model for Liaison services champions the integration of specialist mental health care with the local and wider health care services. The Wythenshawe MHLT is set in a major acute district general hospital and has undergone recent expansion.

We chose to Audit the quality of discharge letters as they are crucial in providing safe, continued care.

Aim & Objectives

To assess the quality of discharge letters provided by the Medical MHLT to GPs. The objectives to ensure all discharged patients had written communication and to improve the quality of letters in line with Trust and RCPsych guidance.

Method

This was a retrospective Audit. All patients seen by the Medical MHLT within a specified time frame of 12 weeks were sampled.

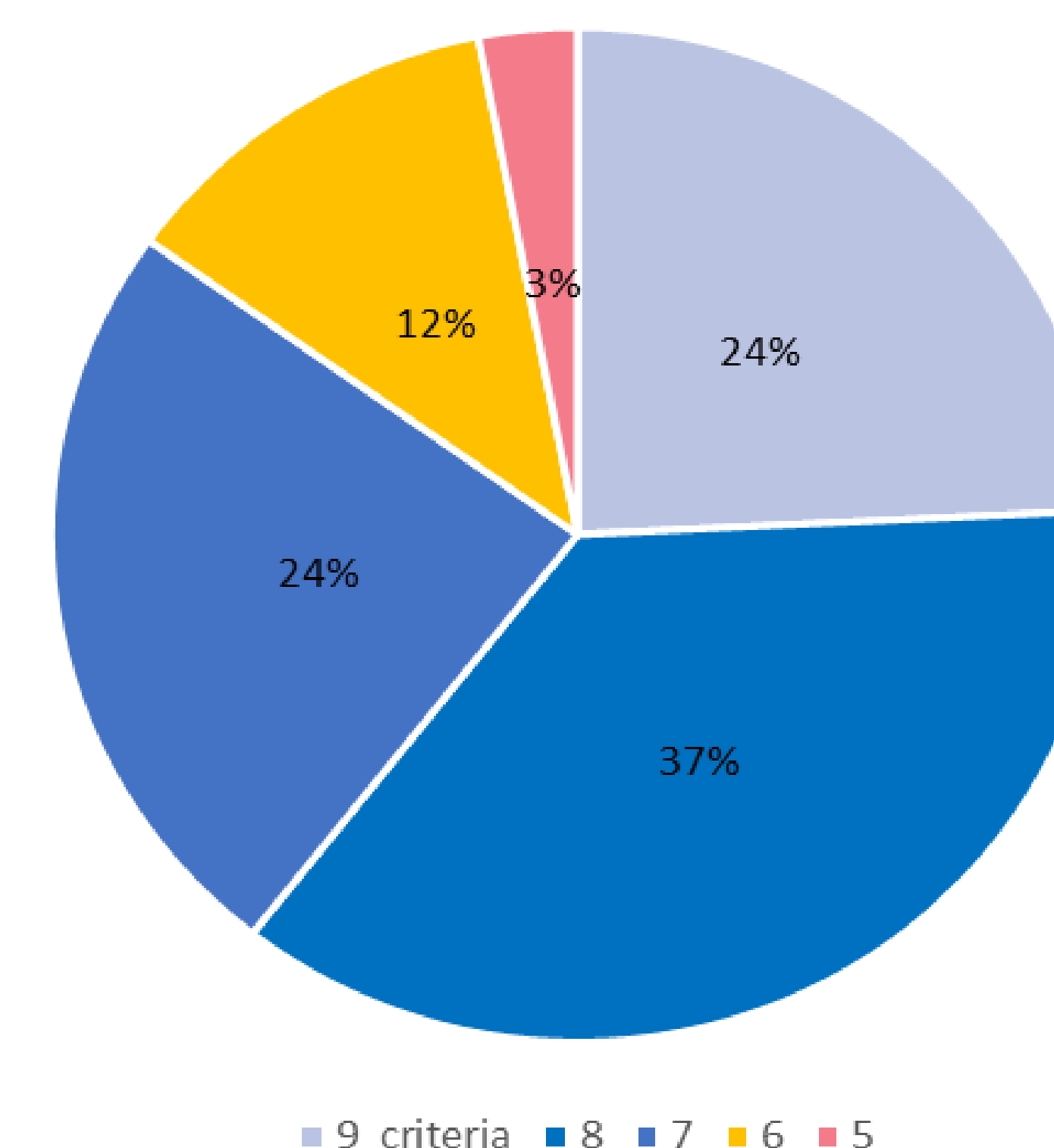
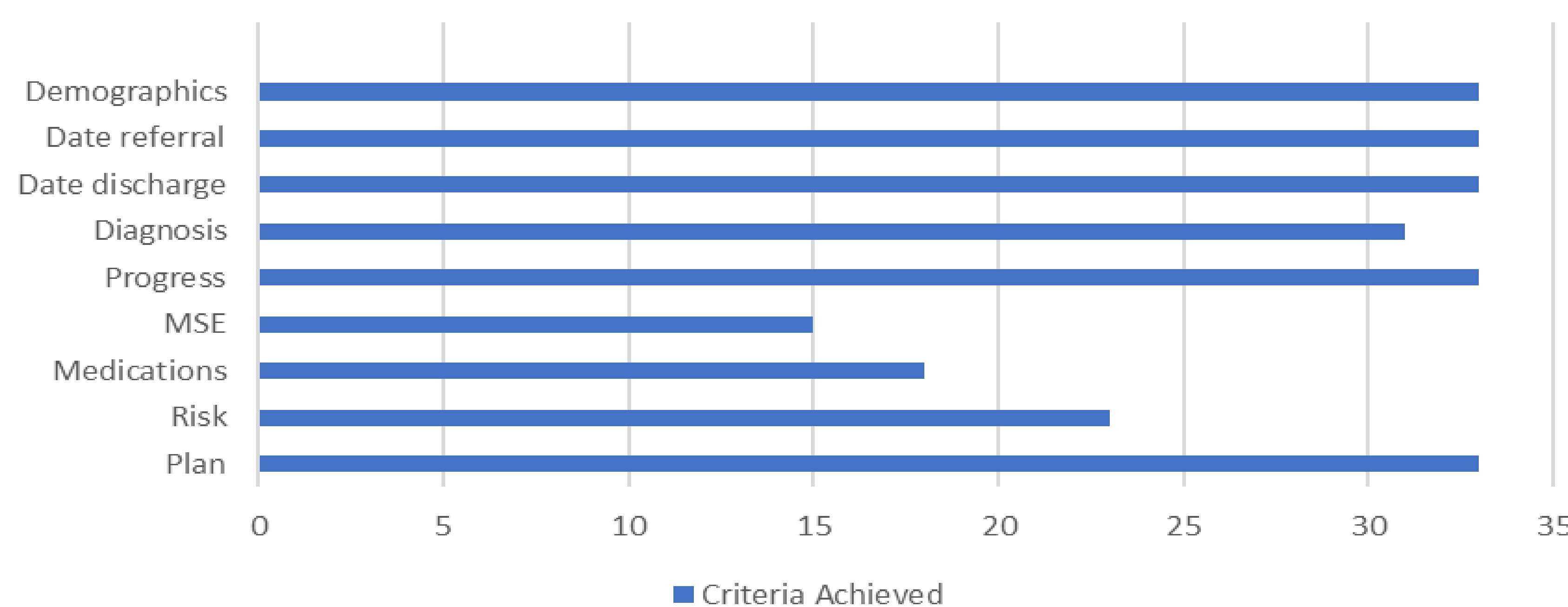
A data collection tool listed 9 domains to be cross checked for inclusion criteria in the discharge letters. Record of omission was also noted.

Main outcome measures recorded were patient demographics, date of referral and discharge, diagnosis, progress of symptoms, mental state exam (MSE), medications including dosage, risk assessment and plan.

Results

A total of 33 patients were sampled. The overall percentage of letters fulfilling all set standards was 24%. The percentage of patients with the least criteria of 5 being met was 3%. From 33 letters; 8 patients had all 9 criteria completed, 12 patients had 8 completed, 8 patients had 7 completed, 4 patients had 6 completed and 1 patient had 5 completed.

Criteria Achieved



Conclusions

A 100% completion rate was achieved in 5 domains. It was noted that a letter template led to higher levels of corresponding attainment. Certain standards were routinely not met with the MSE documented in only 5 letters. The inclusion of medications with dosage was present in 54% of letters, on 6 occasions both medication and dose was missed, this was highlighted as an area of concern. Overall, the Audit highlighted that improvements are needed.

Recommendations

- Introduce changes and expected criteria inclusion to all MHLT members.
- Update of standard operating procedures and letter template.
- Presentation of findings and recommendations at the MHLT Managers meeting and Trust Audit day.
- Re-Audit in 6 months