A survey of venous thromboembolism (VTE) prevention practice in the UK

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BACKGROUND

Recent publication of the national VTE risk assessment by the Department of Health (DH) and the VTE prevention pathway by the Map in Medicine have helped provide Trusts with a framework for assessing and implementing VTE prevention. We conducted a survey of VTE practice in December 2008 of 52 UK centres, of which 47 contribute to the VERITY registry (11 also enrolled in the VERITY PUSH outcomes study) and seven are designated as Exemplar centres.

RESULTS

• Several documents have been published recently, including the national VTE risk assessment from the Department of Health and the VTE prevention pathway on the Map in Medicine.
• These documents have helped provide Trusts with a framework for assessing and implementing VTE prevention.
• To determine how this framework is being implemented, we conducted a survey of VTE practice.
• The VERITY network provides a useful cross-section of hospitals in the UK. With 47 currently contributing data to the registry, if VERITY centres are enrolled in the VERITY PUG study to determine outcomes (death, recurrence of VTE and bleeding) at 6 months in patients diagnosed with VTE and treated with low-molecular weight heparin.

METHODS

• 52 UK centres were sent copies of a 2-page survey containing 23 questions, of which 10 were relevant to thromboprophylaxis.
• The PCT Exemplar Centre was not sent a copy of the survey.

RESULTS

• 32 centres were returned completed (62%)
  • Missing centres included 1 Exemplar centre
  • 1 PUSH centre
  • 18 VERITY centres
• 31 centres (54%) had a local thrombosis committee

Audit of risk assessment

Less than half of centres had audited the use of risk assessment tools – national risk assessment tool was already employed by 1 in 8 hospitals.

Audit of thromboprophylaxis

More centres (71%) had audited thromboprophylaxis use. Nearly all centres employed at least 1 risk-assessment tool – national risk assessment tool was employed by 60% of centres.

PROSPECTIVE EXEMPLAR CENTRE

Key:

PUSH Centre
VERITY Centre

Exemplar centres

PUSH centres
VERITY centres

Total

Catheter-based thromboprophylaxis use

Appropriate thromboprophylaxis rates varied widely

CONCLUSIONS

• At present, VTE risk assessment practice remains variable but less so than VTE preventions (1 Exemplar centre).
• Just 3 months after publication, the national risk assessment tool was already employed by 1 in 8 hospitals.

ABOUT VERITY

What is VERITY?

VERITY (Venae Thrombosis Registry) is a national venous thromboembolism registry, with a mission to empower healthcare professionals to develop and improve the treatment of venous thromboembolism through increased knowledge and sharing best practice.

VERITY objectives

• Identify opportunities to improve the quality of care for patients with VTE
• Describe diagnostic, treatment and prevention strategies for VTE
• Develop hypothesis for clinical research to improve VTE
• Provide a forum for feedback on care and prevention interest in VTE

For details on VERITY methods, findings and data analysis, see the website: www.verityonline.co.uk