LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER - SHREVEPORT

GUIDELINES FOR UTILIZATION OF CARE PATHS

Purpose:

A care path is a standardized, written plan of care based on Diagnosis Related Group (DRG) which serves as a guideline to all medical personnel involved in the care of the patient. The purpose is to provide quality patient care in a cost-effective manner for that specific DRG.

Procedure:

1. All patients will be placed on a care path if they are admitted with a primary diagnosis in which a care path has been developed.

2. The RN, during the admission process will be responsible for identifying those patients to be placed on a care path. The RN will then notify the attending physician or designee that his/her patient has been assigned to a care path. A physician’s order shall be written to discontinue use of the care path.

3. If a physician writes an order to cancel use of the care path, he/she must document rationale in the physician’s progress note. A Variance Report Form (S/N 1057) shall also be generated by Nursing personnel stating that the patient has been removed from the care path.

4. Each patient care unit will receive a list of available care paths and be responsible for maintaining a par level of care paths for the most frequently admitted DRG’s.

5. The appropriate sticker will be placed on the front of the chart indicating that the patient has been placed on a clinical pathway.

6. The clinical pathway contains indicators that must be met each day/24 hours and completed by the end of the 11-7 shift. The RN/LPN will place a check mark in the box next to the shift indicating care has been provided according to the pathway.

7. Variation(s) from the care path shall be documented by unit nursing staff on the back of the pathway document. If the patient fails to meet a proposed goal for that day, nursing staff shall document the reason the goal was not achieved and the action taken. Unit Case Managers will collaborate with medical/nursing staff regarding discharge planning and use of care paths as needed.
8. The Care paths shall be removed from the chart by the nurse processing the discharge and immediately forwarded to the Utilization Review Department for data analysis. To facilitate this process, marked baskets will be placed on each unit for Care Path placement once the patient is discharged. Case Managers will collect the Care Paths daily and deliver to the Central office.

EVALUATION:

The Clinical pathways will be evaluated quarterly and updated annually or as needed by each discipline and medical staff based on variances obtained during that time period. Ongoing evaluation provides valuable information to provide quality patient care and medical/nursing practice accountability.

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Administrator

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Date

Approved by Clinical Board: 10/00
Written: 8/00