YOUR GUIDE TO CLINICAL PATHWAYS AND ORDER SETS

Historically, the use of clinical pathways and order sets to guide patient care has been beneficial to both patients and health-care providers. As we move forward, innovate health care and implement the Epic system, the Project Fusion team and stakeholders across the Atlas Alliance have put much consideration into aligning our current pathways and order sets with Epic’s comprehensive pathways, order sets, documentation tools and workflows. The Project Fusion team is ensuring that our current processes are integrated into the Epic system to enhance both patient care and the provider experience.
WHAT IS A CLINICAL PATHWAY?
A clinical pathway is a printed guideline for care, used after a patient has had a specific procedure done or has had a specific illness diagnosed. Since each patient is unique, each patient’s care is customized to meet his or her needs while keeping these guidelines in mind. A clinical pathway incorporates physician orders with patient assessments and outcomes that involves timed milestones following procedures, which in turn affects what decisions are made for patient care.

WHY ARE CLINICAL PATHWAYS USED?
Clinical pathways are used to describe and implement clinical standards and help to provide quality and efficient patient care. Examples of clinical pathways are:
- **Surgery** – Fractured Hip clinical pathway
- **Obstetrics and Gynecology** – the Caesarean Birth: Newborn clinical pathway
- **Cardiology** – the Cardiac Surgical ICU clinical pathway

HOW ARE CLINICAL PATHWAYS IMPLEMENTED?
The physician orders clinical pathways for patients. The clinical pathway documents are part of the patient’s permanent record and are integrated into the clinical documentation.

WHAT IS A CLINICAL ORDER SET?
A clinical order set is a pre-defined template that provides support in making clinical decisions for a specific condition or medical procedure. It is a grouping of orders that standardizes and expedites the ordering process for a common clinical scenario. Clinical order sets guide clinicians while treating patients to ensure that they do not miss any critical components of care.

HOW WILL CLINICAL PATHWAYS AND ORDER SETS BE INCORPORATED IN THE EPIC BUILD?
The Project Fusion team and the Nursing Professional Practice Department, Chief Nursing Officer and educators met to manually review 95 clinical pathways. The reviewers analysed them for area of use, acuity, compliance and volume to determine, while aligning them with the new Epic system:
- **25 inpatient clinical pathways** will be transformed into electronic clinical pathways in Epic (2 University of Ottawa Heart Institute, 4 Medicine, 14 Surgery, 5 Obs/Gyn)
- **41 clinical pathways** will be converted to order sets
- **29 clinical pathways** will use outpatient documentation functionality in Epic

The Project Fusion team has been inventorying and analyzing almost 500 paper order sets across the Atlas Alliance. The team is assessing the order sets for content, duplication and active use. Once this review is complete, the goal is to build approximately 350 standardized electronic order sets available in Epic for the Atlas Alliance.
NEXT STEPS...

**IS THE QUALITY OF PATIENT CARE DECREASING AS WE IMPLEMENT EPIC?**

No. The provider’s systematic approach to monitor a patient’s outcomes following a procedure or illness and the quality of care to the patient will not only be maintained but also improved using the Epic system, which instantly automates electronic processes and easily enables a patient’s care to be monitored by the entire care team. By helping clinicians complete each intervention safely and in a standardized manner, they ensure patient safety and mitigate risk. While it may seem like the quantity of clinical pathways and order sets are decreasing, the protocols are being incorporated in clinical pathways, order sets, workflows and the content build of the Epic system.

**WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?**

There are review sessions from April until June 2018 as approximately 15 working groups each will review about 10 to 15 order sets.

**WHAT IS YOUR ROLE?**

You, too, can play a critical role in helping to shape how clinical pathways and order sets will be woven into the Epic system. Reach out to your Readiness Owner or Change Sponsor to participate or help identify subject matter experts to take part in the review sessions.

Stay tuned for date and location details!

For more information, email projectfusion@toh.ca or visit the Project Fusion website at [http://www.ottawahospital.on.ca/en/project-fusion](http://www.ottawahospital.on.ca/en/project-fusion) (password: fusion).