

Essay on chart audits

[Business](#), [Management](#)



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Chart audits are methods of reviewing patients' records for determining the process of care. Chart audits evaluate medical records to determine how the medical processes are done and evaluate whether the processes can be improved. Auditing of medical charts is an important step towards the successful operation of medical processes. Chart audits are very useful for the identification of morbidity patterns, assessing complex conditions and comorbidities in patients (Duke University Medical Center, 2012).

Chart audits are carried out for many reasons. The main reason is evaluating the quality of care to find areas of improvements. Health care practitioners who are discouraged with the processes of care can use chart audits to determine areas of improvements. Chart audits are also used in medical research like the measurement of prevalence of diseases and the impact of treatment procedures on patients. They are also used for administrative requirements to justify coded bills. Chart audits are useful in compliance to the standards of health care set by health regulatory bodies (MOC, 2012).

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According to Barbara, et al (2008), the steps followed in making a chart audit include,

- a) Selection of a topic
- b) Identification of measures
- c) Identification of the patient population
- d) Determination of the size of the sample
- e) Creation of audit tools
- f) Collection of data
- g) Summarizing the results
- h) Analysis and application of results

Many quality improvement models are used in quality improvement of chart audits. One example is the six-sigma model. According to Swanton, (2012), six sigma is a quality improvement technique that seeks to improve the processes in an organization through the identification and the removal of errors in an organization.

Six sigma is a continuous approach to problem solving and eradication of errors for the continuous improvement of processes in organizations. Six sigma can be used to improve the quality of chart audits using the DMAIC process improvement model of six sigma. Each six-sigma process carried out within an organization follows defined steps that have quantified targets (Swanton, 2012).

DMAIC steps of six sigma

Step 1. Define (D)

The definitive stage of six sigma defines the problem, its importance, the person to solve the problem and the target group to be measured. The more work is done in defining a problem, the higher the probability of solving it successfully (Swanton, 2012).

Step ii Measurement (M)

The measurement step entails understanding and quantification of the problem through the collection and validation of data. Six sigma utilizes statistical tools in the measurement processes (Swanton, 2012).

Step three. Analysis (A)

This step entails the identification of the causes of a problem. Statistical tests are done are carried out to determine the most appropriate corrective action that should be done. The non-value adding steps of the business process are identified in the analysis step (Swanton, 2012).

Step four Improve (I)

The improvement step entails the use of corrective action. This step eliminates the root cause of a problem and implements the solution for the problem (Swanton, 2012).

Step five control (C)

The control phase of the DMAIC model is all about getting back to business as usual and monitoring the changes implemented for aberration. This process entails the process of getting an organization back to the usual

processes with the benefit of having removed the problematic processes from the organization processes (Swanton, 2012).

The Organizations That the Physicians Need To Affiliate themselves to keep themselves Updated on health standards are The National Committee for Quality Assurance and AAPC. The NCQA is the body that issues HEDIS (Healthcare Effectiveness Data And Information Sets (NSQA, 2012)). AAPC is the credentialing and training organization for medical coding, medical auditing, practice management and auditing compliance (AAPC, 2012).

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