Medical Director in the Spotlight

Dr. Monica Vandivort recently began serving Good Samaritan Society – Quiburi Mission in Benson, Arizona. She is board certified in geriatrics and palliative medicine, as well as a certified medical director, and a champion for home care programs and health system change. She and her husband, Nathan, are recent empty nesters, with their fourth child graduating from high school this year, which should leave them more time for enjoying their hobbies of tile setting and gospel music. We’re so glad to welcome you!

Medical Provider Guidelines

One of the persistent key findings from our annual survey of medical directors and administrators is that both groups lack clarity about the medical director role. In May 2017, we instituted a new process to share a document with all of our medical providers that clearly outlines roles and responsibilities. Click here to access this document. I hope this brings value to you; I encourage you to discuss it with your administrator. If there are questions, please contact me.

Regulatory Update

One area of focus in the updated CMS regulations is improving safety during transitions of care, resulting in new requirements for communication between healthcare providers at these times. One of the requirements that impacts physicians and nonphysician providers is the expectation for a discharge summary when a person transfers out of a post-acute or long-term care facility. This is similar to what has long been expected upon discharge from a hospital stay.

Pharmacy Update

Warfarin remains a high-risk medication, and we are working on new approaches to improve safety. We started using a “Trigger Tool” approach to help indicate excessive bleeding in persons who are taking warfarin by monitoring orders for Vitamin K. When this medication is ordered, we are taking a closer look at the precipitating factors. The purpose is not to be punitive, but to identify ways that we can avoid future occurrences. The most common finding is that there has been a breakdown in the monitoring protocols due to bypassing the recommended ordering protocols. If there is an adverse event related to warfarin in your center, please encourage the employees and pharmacist in their investigative efforts and support them in process improvements.

AMDA-The Society for Post-Acute and LTC Medicine

Each of you has been provided a complimentary membership to AMDA. Please let me know by taking this brief survey if this has been valuable to you: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/G3GMSD3. Survey responses will help us decide if we should continue this benefit.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me.