

Getting the balance right...

creation and implementation of a new fluid chart for paediatric inpatients, a quality improvement project.

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The Background

- Fluid therapy is ubiquitous in healthcare, with harms and benefits.
- Guidance from the National Institute of Health & Care Excellence and the European Society of Paediatric & Neonatal Intensive Care recommend accurate recording of input, output, balance, and electrolytes.



The Problem

- Audit of fluid charts showed poor compliance with national recommendations.
- Only 1/3 (n=11, Apr-June 2023) patients had 24-hour fluid input documented, 20% of charts did not include all fluids administered, only 20% included a calculated urine output, and fewer than 10% included all output.

What We Did

- Received feedback that current chart cumbersome and difficult to complete.
- Current chart not compliant with national recommendations.
- Identified potential for improved education around fluid charting and need for standardised approach.

Our Solution

- Identified clear, well-designed chart in nearby Trust.
- With permission, modified it to meet needs of local unit, and to help meet national & international standards.
- Created learning package about fluid charting.
- Implemented new chart and package as part of a trial.

Re-audit & Next Steps

- Re-audit (n=15, Sept-Oct 2023) showed the chart was completed in 87% of patients: 80% documented 24-hour fluid input, and all patients had daily U&E monitoring. Over half still had no 24-hour output calculated.
- Engagement with ward teams to identify barriers to implementation, with further education around use.

