

Hide and Seek: Searching for EMS Run Sheets

The Problem

When trauma patients are brought to BIDMC, the EMS team rarely leaves behind the “run sheet” – a data rich log of care and treatment performed in the field and necessary pre-hospital information for the BIDMC Trauma Service. This data is required by the MA DPH and National Trauma Data Bank (NTDB). Referring EMS agencies currently batch send their run sheets after the fact to the Health Information Management (HIM) Department. As presented in the American College of Surgeons’ *Green Book* (standards and elements of performance for accreditation), EMS patient care records are important for building and maintaining trauma registries. The BIDMC Trauma Service notes that approximately 5% of all run sheets are found in patient records. Multiple problems and inefficiencies ensue, including:

- Lack of trauma patient labeled EMS run sheets, thus requiring further resources for HIM to reconcile patient identification and record storage; and
- HIPAA limitations on the Trauma Registry having direct access to EMS databases, thus requiring EM/EMS collaboration to relay this data request; and
- Trauma Administrative Coordinator’s responsibility to track EMS trips, generate reports, and in conjunction with EM/EMS, they communicate said requests with various EMS companies on a bi-monthly basis; and
- Delay in Trauma Registry abstracting data points/reporting to state and NTDB due to lack of information and detail; and
- The increase in trauma patient volume; this requires additional collaborative resources between EM/EMS and the Trauma Service to retrieve EMS run sheets.

Aim/Goal

Within the next nine months, our goal is to reduce the amount of missing run sheets generated by EMS, and ultimately receive an average of 75% of EMS patient care records direct to the Trauma Service within 30 days of admission without prompts from BIDMC.

The Team

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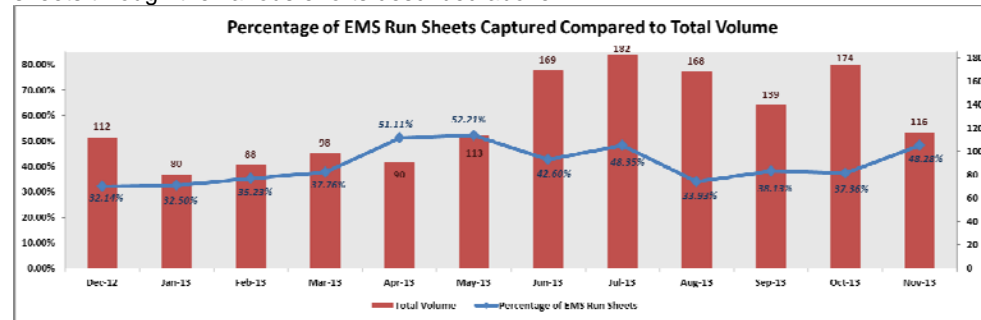
The Interventions

Chronic deficiencies in obtaining EMS run sheets are a major problem in the state of Massachusetts.

- BIDMC Emergency Medicine created an innovative solution. The BIDMC Emergency Department Dashboard is electronically linked to the Boston EMS electronic medical record. EM is currently refining the algorithm for matching records so that there is real time access to the EMS run sheets.
- In addition, we established an electronic method of obtaining EMS run sheets directly from Boston EMS, and our other major EMS agencies.
- We also created a Trauma Outreach Committee to specifically follow this problem, and Committee members are in direct contact with EMS to ensure that we are able to have the run sheets directly sent to the Trauma Service.
- We are working with HIM to ensure EMS sheets ultimately make it into the online medical record (OMR).

The Results/Progress to Date

We increased compliance and now capture an average of 40.80% of all EMS run sheets through the various efforts described above.



Lessons Learned

Missing EMS run sheets is a systemic issue affecting not only BIDMC, but is observed at other Massachusetts hospitals. By approaching the problem in an integrated manner, we are working to improve communications, accessibility, processes, and outcomes.

Next Steps/What Should Happen Next

This problem may improve as more agencies move to electronic medical records. An IT based solution linking these records to OMR may be useful. In the meantime, the Trauma Service will work with EMS contacts on a bi-monthly basis to retrieve EMS run sheets, and strengthen the communication pipeline. Efforts at the system level to resolve missing EMS run sheets will be taken on by way of BIDMC EM/EMS and Trauma Service with the help of Information Services and HIM. In addition, efforts at the state level to develop solutions through representation at Massachusetts Emergency Medical Care Advisory Board (EMCAB) meetings are taking place.