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Deleting a Sacred Cow from the EMR: Removing Gastric Residual Volume Assessments

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Purpose
• Implement current clinical practice guidelines related to gastric residual volume (GRV) assessments for monitoring feeding intolerance.

Background
• Enteral nutrition for metabolic support is critical for survival and recovery from crucial illness.
• Current clinical practice guidelines do not support the practice of monitoring GRVs.
• Over 98% of critical care nurses utilize GRV monitoring to assess for feeding intolerance.
• In our urban, Academic Level I Trauma Center, electronic medical record (EMR) orders include GRV assessments which supported this nursing practice.

Systems can promote or inhibit translation of clinical practice guidelines.

Through a modification to the EMR we removed an electronic prompt that perpetuated the outdated practice of GRV assessments.

Methods
• Conducted literature search to validate 2016 Guidelines
• Reviewed current clinical practice observations in ICU setting
• Discussion with practice councils

Results
• Practice councils recommended to remove GRV orders from the EMR for all patients receiving enteral nutrition.
• Information Technology removed GRV assessments from the order set.
• Education of practice and EMR change to unit, division, and organization.
• Next steps include:
  • Nursing survey to assess practice change.
  • Collaborating with hospital bioinformatics to obtain data on feeding intolerance to evaluate effectiveness.

*References available on request