Aim Statement: Within six months, 100% of patients taking complex psychiatric medications (clozapine and lithium) will remain safely treated with no serious adverse outcomes. Background to problem worth solving There are high rates of mental illness in custody, including at the Area 2 Clinic at Long Bay Correctional Centre. Prison is a unique and challenging environment for healthcare. Clozapine and lithium can be very effective psychiatric treatments but require close monitoring. Side effects can be severe and potentially fatal. Successful treatment improves health and justice outcomes (reduced rearrest, reduced hospitalisations, improved safety to self and others). Patients want to remain on these medications if safe to do so.

Results

No serious adverse outcomes were achieved. There were no clinic cancellations or reduction of clinical time available due to the project.

Discussion

The key outcome of this project was that the small but complex group of patients treated with clozapine and lithium received best practice monitoring. Interestingly, these positive results occurred despite additional challenges, including unexpected transfers of patients between custodial areas, and changes in staffing. A low rate of serious adverse outcomes remained present. This suggests that despite improved monitoring, the needs of this patient group remains high. Future goals include keeping adverse outcomes as low as possible, while continuing best practice monitoring and individualised care.

Plans to sustain change

- Continue complex care meetings in consultation with clinical staff
- Ongoing data collection and monitoring
- Consider expansion to other complex medications and/or clinics
- Consideration of new medication systems

Plans to spread / share change

- Submit to ACI Innovation Exchange
- Present at Justice Health Academic Program and other conferences
- Liasse with other Network projects in relation to metabolic monitoring and medication prescribing

Systematic review


