Optimising Post-Operative Discharge Analgesia For Patients Undergoing Major Shoulder Surgery (Rotator Cuff Repair Or Shoulder Replacement)

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1) Introduction

After the effects of the nerve blockade have worn off, shoulder surgery patients can have moderate to severe pain for more than 48 hours after surgery¹. A pragmatic approach to address post operative pain is through diligent use of simple oral analgesics combined with weak and strong oral opioids. There is currently no widely adopted guideline for the discharge analgesia for this group of patients at Queen Alexandra Hospital.

2) Aims

- Identify variability in prescribing practice for post operative analgesia on discharge for major shoulder surgery (MSS) patients.
- See if a difference exists between week day and weekend discharges regarding discharge analgesia provided.
- Measure the impact of the aforementioned prescribing variability on patient's pain scores and need to access medical services for additional analgesia.

3) Objectives

- Record discharge analgesia provided to MSS patients and their compliance.
- Record patient's post-operative Wessex Pain Scores* (WPS).
- Record instances of additional analgesia being required by patients.

3) Methods

4) Key Results & Outcomes

***Wessex Pain Score**

- 0 = no pain at rest or on movement
- 1 = no pain at rest, mild pain on movement
- 2 = moderate pain at rest or on movement
- 3 = severe pain at rest

Weekday Discharge WPS vs. Weekend Discharge WPS

Day 1	Day 3	Day 5	Day 1	Day 3	Day 5
2	1	1	1	3	2
0	2	2	3	3	3
2	2	2	3	3	3
3	2	2	1	3	3
2	2	1	1	2	3
3	2	2	3	3	3
1	1	2	2	3	n/a
3	3	3	2	2	1
2	2	1	2	2	2
2	1	2	1	1	1

5) Conclusion

- Weekend discharges of MSS patient at Queen Alexandra Hospital appear to experience more post-operative pain, especially shoulder replacements.
- To reduce unwarranted variation in discharge analgesia and improve overall pain management, a post-operative analgesia timetable specific to MSS patients will be developed.