Tracing the Way to Better Patient Care from the Laboratorian’s View

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February 10, 2020
Webinar Housekeeping

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Questions/Comments:

• Submit questions via the Questions panel at any time.

Note: Today’s presentation is being recorded.
Tracer Methodology and Importance to Laboratories

− How to prepare for tracers, #1 most asked about topic at our past laboratory education forum

− Laboratory services interact with areas that provide direct patient care services

− Tracers include:
  − Patient care experience throughout the health care process.
  − Integration of related processes and coordination of communication among disciplines and departments.
Objectives

– Define tracers as they relate to patient experiences
– Understand the process and the value of The Joint Commission Tracer Methodology
– Understand applications of tracers
Tracer History and Advantages

− The Joint Commission started using tracers in 2004 to look at systems and processes for the delivery of health care.

− Tracers are real current and historical patient laboratory tests and services

− Tracers provide a more accurate assessment of real day to day functions

− Tracers can identify gaps or potential risk points that could affect patient safety.

− Tracers give meaning to the standards
Tracer End Goal

To identify risks as they relate to patient safety and quality
**Target**

The surveyor or reviewer targets (or selects) a tracer subject—an individual patient, a system, or a program-specific topic—based mainly on the organization’s care, treatment, and services.

**Review**

The surveyor or reviewer examines documents such as policies, medical records, management plans, data reports, and service contracts.

**Assess**

The surveyor or reviewer assesses compliance with standards by making observations and asking questions and also defines the level of risk for any cited noncompliance.

**Communicate**

The surveyor or reviewer communicates with tracer participants, asking questions and sharing concerns in a way that encourages them to answer thoroughly and provide perspective and context.

**Educate**

The surveyor or reviewer educates tracer participants whenever possible to help organizations solve compliance problems.

**Report**

The surveyor or reviewer reports the results of the tracer, which are shared in a clear and timely way so the organization can make any required improvements.
Selection of Patient Tracers
Two Year Review

Representative of Patient Populations
- ED, ICU, MedSurg, NICU, OR,
- Cardiology
- Oncology
- Womens Health
- Infectious Disease

New Tests, Methods, IS
- Validations and IQCP
- Staff Education
- Communication
- Information Systems

Point-of-Care
- Cath Lab
- ED
- NICU
- LD
- ICU
- OR
- Radiology
- Dialysis
Laboratory Results and Orders
Patient and Specimen Identification
Training and Competency
THE POWER OF A TRACER

- PreAnalytical Laboratory
  - Orders/Medical Record
  - Laboratory Results
  - Communication

- PreAnalytical Laboratory
  - Patient Identification and Infection Control
  - Specimen Acceptability
  - Specimen Delivery

- Analytical Laboratory
  - Quality Control/Instrument Maintenance/Calibration/Correlation/Calibration/Temps/Verification/Procedures
  - Communication and Problem Solving
THE POWER OF A TRACER

Post Analytical

- Critical Values and Communication
- Medical Record Report

Post/Post Analytical

- Discharged/Transferred Patients
Mock Tracers

Points to Consider:

− Choose tracers to reflect patient population
− Have front line staff and supervisors participate
− Observe closely (closed records and actual processes)
− Communicate with staff and leadership
− Find solutions and educate
− Report successes
Mock Patient Tracer 1: Point of Care
Mock Patient Tracer 1: Point of Care

Fictitious Patient Scenario:

A patient comes to the ED with cardiac problems. The ED sends some of the laboratory tests to the laboratory. Also, a new employee in the ED performs a troponin point of care test. The patient is then transferred to the Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory where the patient had an activated clotting time (ACT) and an O2 saturation test.

What should you look for?
Mock Tracer 1: Point of Care Topics:

- Specimen collection and infection control
- Correlation troponin vs main chemistry
- Quality control (troponin daily and ACT every 8 hours of patient testing) or IQCP
- If IQCP then does it follow CMS requirements and does your QC follow at least manufacturers
- Training and competency for testing staff
- Education for testing and technical consultant follows CLIA 88
- Procedures accessible to testing staff
Mock Patient Tracer 2: Blood Transfusion
Mock Patient Tracer 2: Blood Transfusion

Fictitious Patient Scenario:

A patient had come into the ED and a stat type and crossmatch was ordered. The physician wanted to transfuse prior to the laboratory completing the crossmatch. The patient then goes to the operating room and then back to the ICU. Transfusions occurred in all three locations. The patient was also a dialysis patient.
Mock Tracer 2 Blood Transfusion Topics:

- Emergency release process
- Patient history antibodies
- Quality control, maintenance
- Blood storage and alternative blood storage
- Staff competency for laboratory and nursing
- Monitor transfusion and transfusion reaction
- Policies, procedures --- are they followed?
Where does your tracer path lead?
Overview of today’s webinar

– **Tracers are patient focused** and provide a real assessment of processes

– **Tracers identify potential risks** in processes making it possible to correct these risks and prevent harm
Time For Your Questions!

ATTENDEE PARTICIPATION

- Please continue to submit your text questions and comments using the Questions Panel.

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Tracer Methodology Toolkit

THE TRACER METHODOLOGY TOOLKIT FOR LABORATORIES

Because the tracer is such an important part of a Joint Commission laboratory survey, we’ve assembled some information to help you and your team conduct your own tracers to help prepare for accreditation and assess your readiness.

We’ve included:
- A worksheet for your team to fill out and of course personalize
- Tips on how to choose types of tracers to conduct to benefit your lab’s needs
- Items that tend to be non-compliant during survey
- Frequent questions that are asked in different areas during a tracer

MOCK TRACER TRACKING WORKSHEET FOR LABORATORIES

Use this worksheet to record notes and areas of concern that your team identifies while conducting your organization’s mock tracers. This information can be used to highlight a good practice or to determine issues that may require further follow-up. “Yes” or “No” indicates whether the staff member interviewed during the tracer answered the question correctly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRACER QUESTIONS</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>FOLLOW-UP NEEDED</th>
<th>COMMENTS OR NOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Describe your laboratory process to handle transfusion reactions</td>
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<tr>
<td>What training and orientation have been provided to laboratory staff to handle transfusion reactions?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What data and analysis have you done on the incidence of transfusion reactions in your organization?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What measures have you introduced, if any, to reduce the incidence of transfusion reactions?</td>
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How to contact us

qualitylabs@jointcommission.org

- For initial questions
- Discuss eligibility and timeline
- Access to trial standards
- Request for an application
- Pricing estimate worksheet

Sharon Hibbe
Business Development Manager
Special free in person laboratory conference

- September 29, 2020 Oakbrook Terrace, Illinois
- Hear from Joint Commission surveyors, staff, and customers
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- Reception the evening of September 28, 2020
- Save the date and email us to be on the mailing list for more information at qualitylabs@jointcommission.org
Thank you for attending today’s webinar!

For additional information, please contact us at:

qualitylabs@jointcommission.org
Appendix
Today’s Speakers

Aneita Paiano is a surveyor for the Joint Commission’s Laboratory Accreditation Program

Sharon Hibbe is a Business Development Manager for Laboratory Accreditation and Patient Blood Management Certification at The Joint Commission.