

26 A Novel Method for Teaching and Assessing Emergency Department Disposition for Interns: the R2D2 Protocol

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Background: One of the milestones for emergency medicine (EM) residents focuses on emergency department (ED) disposition. We developed a protocol called R2D2, which stands for Reassess patient, Review workup, Discuss the plan of care with the attending and patient, and Discharge summary or treatment plan.

Objectives: We hypothesized that the R2D2 disposition protocol would improve patient's understanding of discharge instructions.

Methods: DESIGN - A prospective randomized trial. SETTING - A university affiliated county hospital. PARTICIPANTS/SUBJECTS -18 EM interns were randomized to the either the R2D2 protocol or standard training for their first ED month. All interns were asked to consent all of their discharged patients for this study unless they were admitted or did not have a telephone number for follow-up. INTERVENTIONS - Interns in the R2D2 group used this protocol to guide them in discharging their ED patients which included a discharge documentation template. Consented patients were later called by research personnel to determine their understanding of discharge instructions. A comparison between the two groups was then made using Fisher's Exact Test.

Results: 331 patients (R2D2= 245, Standard= 86) consented to participate. 48% (158) (R2D2= 119, Standard= 39) had follow up according to protocol. Patients discharged by the R2D2 trained interns were more likely to be able to correctly describe their discharge diagnosis ($p<0.05$), treatment plan ($p<0.001$) and follow up plan ($p<0.001$) and were more likely to be given return warnings for the ED by their intern ($p<0.05$).

Conclusions: Intern utilization of the R2D2 protocol resulted in a greater patient understanding of diagnosis, treatment and follow-up.

Limitations: There were discrepancies in study group size as the R2D2 interns were aware of the study and recruited more patients. Secondly, many patients could not be contacted for follow-up presumably due to their socioeconomic circumstances.