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Improvement of Rituximab infusion workflow

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Introduction

Rituximab is a chimeric monoclonal antibody against the protein CD-20, which is primarily found on the surface of B cells. Rituximab is usually used in combination with conventional chemotherapy for CD-20 positive B cell lymphomas. Rituximab is a self finance item (SFI) or a funded drug, patients need to buy the drug after admission in ward and the patients usually need to receive the treatment 6-8 cycles. The preparation of Rituximab were prepared by ward nurses. The handling hazards of Rituximab are not well documented.

Objectives

To shorten the waiting time on drug purchasing, relieve patients' and relatives' stress caused by drug purchasing, as well as enhance the occupational safety and health (OSH) of ward staffs.

Methodology

Collaboration with nursing staff of Haematology unit, Haematologists, Pharmacist and Nursing Officer in-charge of special out-patient department (SOPD) to work out the new workflow. Develop the drug purchasing workflow The Haematologist will prescribe the SFI drug order at the same time during follow up and decide the date of chemotherapy. The patient or relative then buys the drug early before on admission to avoid rush hour of pharmacy. Preparation of Rituxmab infusion fluid The drug is kept in pharmacy after purchasing. When the patient is admitted in ward and confirmed suitable to receive treatment, the nurse will fax the doctor's prescription order to pharmacy. Then the designated staff of pharmacy will prepare the Rituximab infusion fluid in the room with type 2 negative pressure isolator and send the Rituximab infusion fluid to ward by designated staff.

Result

The new workflow is adopted in our Haematology unit since October 2012. 8 – 10 patients are admitted for Rituximab infusion each month. The workflow runs smoothly, the patients and relatives claimed that thus save their time in drug purchasing and no need walk around in hospital repeatedly to buy the drug. In addition, the nursing staffs

are no need to prepare the bio-hazard medication under ward environment, and resulting in enhance the OSH of ward staffs.