

Allergy Awareness Week: The use of teamwork, ward based activities and social media as a novel education strategy in a District General Hospital



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Background:

Local audit and clinical incidents identified areas for improvement in prescribing and administration of medication in patients with allergies. A pilot project using improvement methodology in the medical receiving unit demonstrated significantly improved documentation and prescribing in this patient group . The improvement work was spread to the whole hospital in the format of 'Allergy awareness week' using behavioural change techniques to encourage staff engagement¹

Aims/Objectives:

Improve knowledge and awareness of allergy safety in multidisciplinary staff in a district general hospital using novel practical ward based activities and participation via social media

Method:

- Support was obtained from Medical, Nursing and Pharmacy management
- Ward activities included daily safety briefs (delivered by different staff groups), a novel practical Antibiotic Category Quiz and data collection on current practice
- Daily themes included documentation, administration checks, high risk moments and patient empowerment
- Wards participating fully were entered in a prize draw
- A quiz based on desired learning outcomes allowed staff to participate individually
- Participation and engagement of staff on Twitter was actively encouraged and wards competed for a ‘Twitter Champion Cup’ using **#MKAllergyAwareness17**

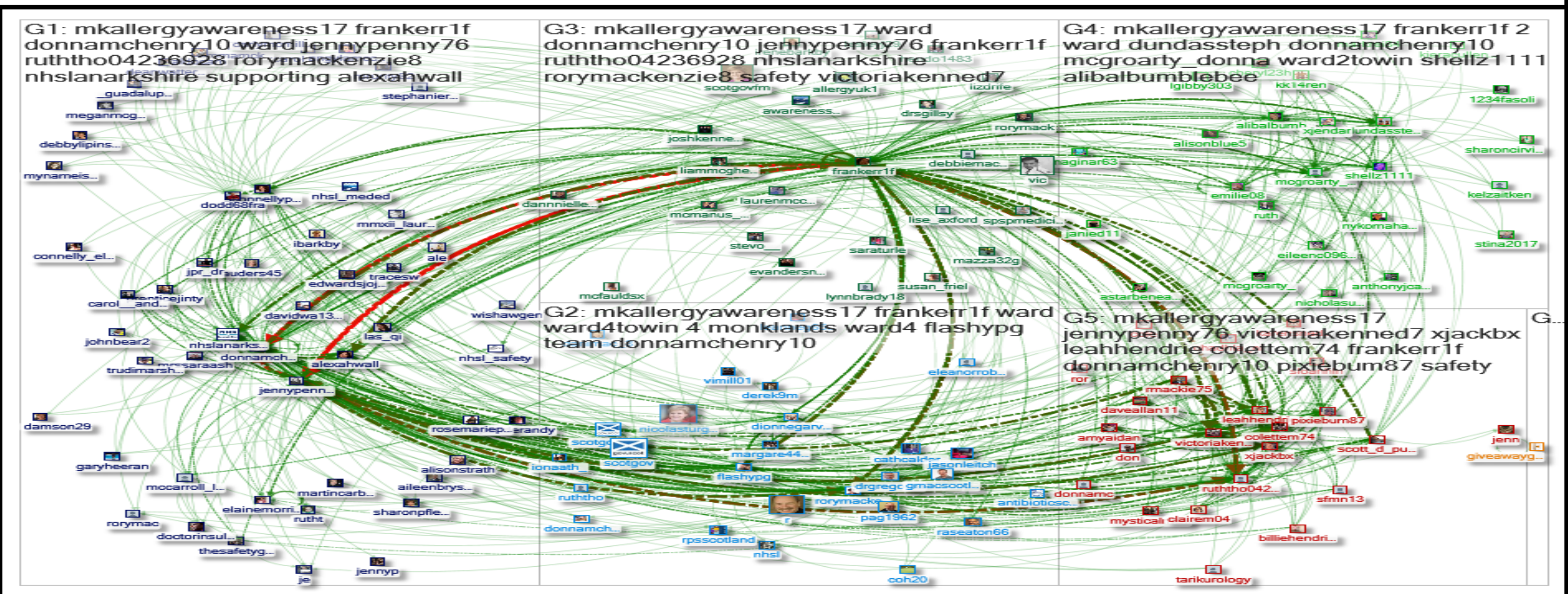
Results:

- Median number of staff participating in the safety briefs was 9 per clinical area (range 4-12)
- 82 people completed the antibiotic category quiz and 111 staff completed the allergy awareness week quiz
- 99% (329/333) patients audited had the correct allergy wrist band per local policy
- Clinical incident reports related to allergy reduced in the period after the awareness week
 - Pre – intervention (Jan to April ‘17, 14 patients with a documented penicillin allergy were prescribed penicillin and 12 patients received a dose (no patients had a reaction)
 - After the awareness week (May– July ‘17), no patients identified with a penicillin allergy were prescribed or administered penicillin

Social Media Impact

The twitter campaign **#MKAllergyAwareness17** was seen by over 250,000 people and caught the attention of national stakeholders such as the Chief Medical Officer Scotland. It was described as a ‘grass roots social media campaign with impressive reach and enthusiasm’ by Graham MacKenzie ² (Public Health Consultant, NHS Lothian). Feedback was very positive locally, with comments on the great atmosphere in the hospital during the awareness week and how it had encouraged joy at work³ with a serious message.

Graph 1 : NodeXL Map showing Twitter interactions over time for #MKAllergyAwareness17



Smith, M., Ceni A., Milic-Frayling, N., Shneiderman, B., Mendes Rodrigues, E., Leskovec, J., Dunne, C., (2010). NodeXL: a free and open network overview, discovery and exploration add-in for Excel 2007/2010/2013/2016, <http://nodexl.codeplex.com/>, from the Social Media Research Foundation, <http://www.smrfoundation.org> generated by Graham MacKenzie May’17

Conclusion

These results demonstrate high levels of staff engagement, and a positive impact on clinical practice, education and most importantly improved patient engagement and increased safety. Local participation by staff engendered ownership, learning and improvement of clinical practice and patient care/safety.

Further work

This model was replicated locally with similar success, demonstrating the model is effective as part of a wider education strategy.

Other successful local campaigns include :

- #MKDPS17**—deteriorating patient awareness, Monklands Hospital, NHSL
- #MKMAW17**—High risk medicines awareness, Monklands Hospital, NHSL
- #AllergyHM17**—Allergy Awareness Week, Hairmyres Hospital, NHSL

References:

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