

Getting Home, Staying Home and Staying Safe: OPAT Discharges during the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Background

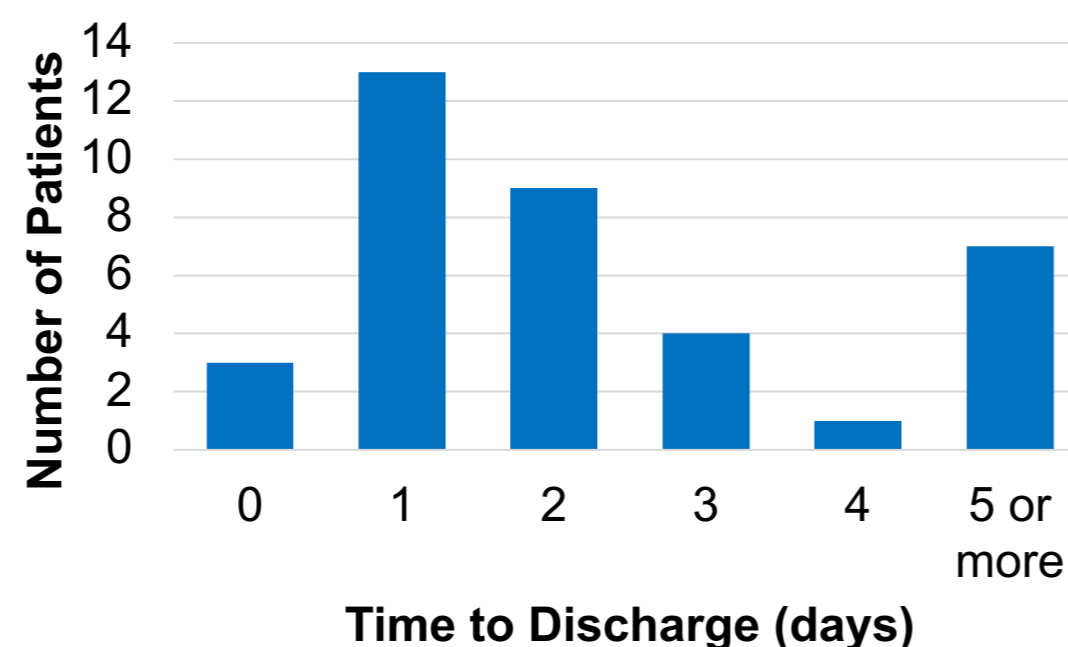
- Outpatient parenteral antimicrobial therapy (OPAT) facilitates early discharge of hospital inpatients.
- Delays to the discharge of OPAT suitable patients often exist, adding unnecessary bed occupancy.
- Delays also expose patients to nosocomial infections (including nosocomial COVID-19 infection).

Methods

- Prospective audit over 3 months (08/10/2020 - 08/01/2021) of all patients referred for OPAT in SVUH.
- Delayed discharge defined as occurring >24 hours after considered suitable for OPAT, in line with national and international standards.

Results – Time to Discharge

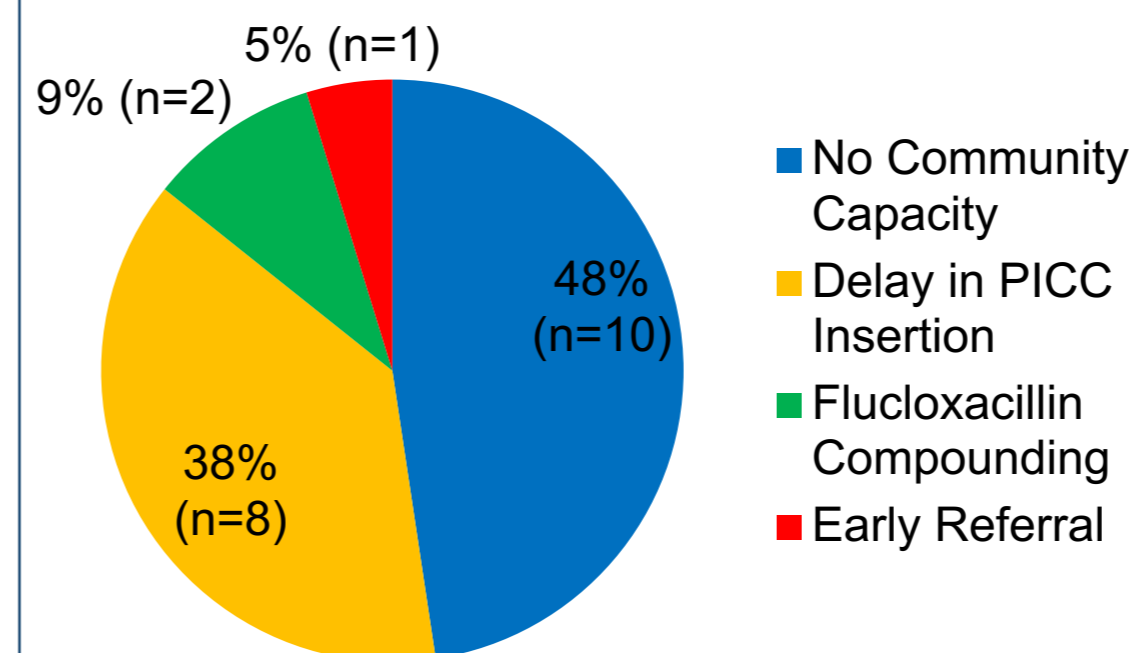
- 53 inpatients were referred for OPAT during study period.
- Majority referred (n= 37, 70%) – suitable for OPAT and discharged to OPAT services.
- Mean time to discharge (from being deemed suitable for OPAT) – 2.8 days (range 0-12 days).
- 89 additional bed days attributed to delays – estimated cost €76,095.



- 4 outpatients were referred for OPAT during study period – all were suitable for OPAT and avoided admission.

Results – Delaying Factors

- Most patients (n=21, 57%) experienced delayed discharges.
- Most frequent factor delaying discharge – lack of capacity in community OPAT services (n=10, 48%).
- 2nd most frequent factor – delay in PICC insertion.
- Mean time from PICC request to PICC insertion – 4.2 days (range 0-12 days).
- Word “OPAT” included in < ½ of PICC requests for OPAT (45%, n=14)



Conclusions

- Many patients experience delays in discharge to OPAT services despite being suitable for OPAT.
- Interventions will be undertaken at local level prior to re-audit. E.g. targeted communication made to interns requesting inclusion of word “OPAT” in PICC requests.
- There is a need to increase community capacity of the OPAT programme.

References

1. Sweeney E et al. Irish National Guidelines on the Provision of Outpatient Parenteral Antimicrobial Therapy (OPAT). Infectious Diseases Society of Ireland. 2019. [Cited 2021 May 17]. Available from: <https://www.idsociety.ie/assets/files/shares/OPAT%20guidelines%20Oct%202019.pdf>
2. Lang T, et al. (1999). A EUROPEAN VERSION OF THE APPROPRIATENESS EVALUATION PROTOCOL: Goals and Presentation. International Journal of Technology Assessment in Health Care, 15(1), 185-197. doi:10.1017/S0266462399152784