The KATZ INDEX: What can it do for you?
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Abstract
Allowing patients to preserve independence through promoting their baseline function, and avoiding the possibility of sub acute rehab should be the focus of our nursing care.

Introduction
•Nurses need a tool to measure baseline functional status and track it from initial admission, and from shift to shift to monitor/prevent functional decline

•32% of discharged patients develop functional decline six months post hospitalization.

Methods & Materials
•After 2 years of meetings with Meridian View, the resource for implementing change on computer documentation, the Katz Index chapter was added in July 2012.

•Katz Index is an assessment in six categories:
  •Bathing
  •Dressing
  •Toileting
  •Transferring
  •Continence
  •Feeding

•Score each category:
  0 = Complete assist
  1 = patient able to perform ADL without assistance.

•KEY:
  •Total of 0 = Complete assist
  •Total of 6 = Independent

What Does Decline Look Like?
•Mrs. Smith is assessed on admission and scores a 5 on the Katz Index.
•The patient is a very high level of independence.
•Mrs. Smith remains in the hospital and upon day four’s assessment, now scores 3 on the Katz Index.

•The Nurse should investigate the decline:
  •Why did the patient decline?
  •Was the patient getting out of bed and ambulating?
  •Did the patients nutritional status change?
  •Does the patient need a PT/OT/ST evaluation?
  •What will they need upon discharge?

Support
•If we are asking the question regarding the patients functional status and are not doing anything with it, then we are missing an opportunity to do better.

•We obtained support from Ken Soucek, director of rehabilitated services, and Rich Hader, Senior VP of nursing who also encourages this type of interdisciplinary collaboration, to enhance the quality of care, which decreases readmissions related to functional decline.

•Let the KATZ lead the way, it is the tool!

Significance of Katz Index
•The score can help the staff plan what level of care the patient needs.

•A decline in Functional status can impact a patients return to home.

•The Katz Index when assessed each shift, can alert the nurse to decline earlier.

•A decline in a total score by two, or more SHOULD prompt the nurse to do a further assessment.

Discussion
•Over a four week period, 149 patients were screened using the computer Katz Index chapter, the results are as follows:

Conclusion
•The Katz Index provided the nurse with much needed information on the patients functional status and allows for easy tracking to assess possible decline and seek appropriate interventions. 22% decline…promotes further investigation and action.

Utilizing the NICHE “TRY THIS” #2, evidence-based practice series on the Katz Index as a guide, the nurse can review more in depth information.

References