E-consent demonstrates better inclusion of critical elements in the informed consent when compared to paper consents

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**Significance & Background**

The authors questioned whether utilizing e-consents would demonstrate better adherence to completion of the critical elements of the informed consent form when compared to paper consents.

**Interventions**

- A retrospective chart review was completed for the first 6 months (1/31/23 - 6/30/23) that e-consents (86 consents) were utilized. The comparison group included the previous 6 months (7/1/22 - 1/30/23) when paper consents were utilized (64 consents).
- Consents were reviewed for the following critical elements:
  - Frequency of Chemotherapy
  - Number of Cycles of Chemotherapy
  - Goal of Treatment
  - Goals of Care
  - Patient Signature
  - Provider Signature
  - Accuracy of Chemotherapy Delivered compared to Chemotherapy listed on the consent form

**Results**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critical Element Present (% of the time)</th>
<th>Paper Consent</th>
<th>E-Consent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency of chemotherapy</td>
<td>91% (58/64)</td>
<td>98% (84/86)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of cycles of chemotherapy</td>
<td>59% (38/64)</td>
<td>35% (30/86)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goals of Treatment</td>
<td>90% (58/64)</td>
<td>98% (84/86)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goals of Care</td>
<td>4% (39/64)</td>
<td>45% (39/86)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patient Signature</td>
<td>98% (63/64)</td>
<td>98% (84/86)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provider Signature</td>
<td>100% (64/64)</td>
<td>98% (85/86)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Evaluation**

- Introduction of e-consent forms provided a convenient and streamlined approach for both nurses and providers in ambulatory clinic.
- E-consent compliance for critical elements was similar or better in all areas except number of cycles of chemotherapy.
- Correct chemotherapy drugs were delivered as outlined in the consent form 100% (150 charts) of the time.

**Discussion**

**PROS For e-Consents:**
- No delay in clinical care
- Better HIPAA practices
- Consent automatically uploaded in Mychart, no scanning delay

**CONS:**
- Number of Chemotherapy Cycles documented was less

**FUTURE:**
- EPIC Enhancements – make all critical element fields a hard stop which would ensure 100% compliance

**References**