Introduction

An aim of the Scottish Government 20/20 vision is that care will be provided to the highest standards of quality and safety, with the patient at the centre of all decisions (2011)(1). Promoting high value care has always been an important concept in medical care and has significant implications especially for critical care, where unnecessary laboratory tests can become part of daily Intensive Care practice. ‘Demand optimisation’ is defined as the process by which diagnostic test use is optimised to maximise appropriate testing which in turn optimises clinical care and drives more efficient use of scarce resources (2015)(2). The aim of rationalising laboratory measurements is to promote reasonable and well balanced use of the valuable yet pricey diagnostic tool.

Aim

Our improvement project over the last year has been to attempt to reduce the reduction and cost of routine blood sampling within the Intensive Care unit by 30% by December 2019.

Results

We looked at 11 of the most frequently requested samples within ICU. Results varied between each of them following verbal education. The three with the largest impact are displayed above. Now that phase 2 has just been implemented the aim is to gather another 6 data collection points and then try and then evaluate the cost implications to the unit from our project.

Conclusion

Our ICU is currently one of 4 early adopter sites within their organisation testing a Value Management Approach. The focus of this approach is to improve patient outcomes without raising costs and/or lowering costs without compromising outcomes - blood testing within ICU is often excessive and unnecessary. The aim of rationalising laboratory measurements is to improve the efficiency of patient centred care and reduction in costs.

Data collected over the last year indicates that staff education plays a role in significantly reducing the amount of blood samples obtained from patients. With the introduction of phase 2 just about to be introduced further data will be collected over the next six months to examine if there is any further improvement and also identify potential cost savings.

References