

Background

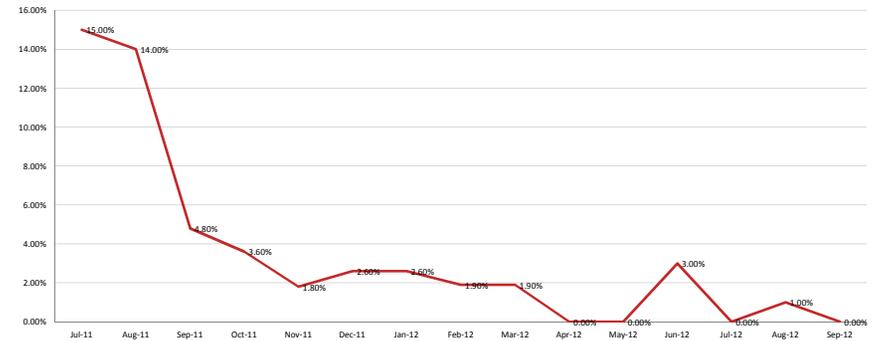
- Readmissions occur because hospitalized patients and their caregivers are not adequately prepared to execute the post-discharge self-care plan & participate in their own care coordination activities.
- Post-hospital visit (PHV) with a physician is protective against readmissions.
- Patients are not adept with the health literacy skills needed to obtain these appointments in a timely manner.

Project Description

- This community based organization implemented a hospital wide objective for every patient to have a PHV appointment prior to leaving.
- The approach was to schedule the visits prior to discharge through open and clear communication, low health literacy tools, role-modeling, coaching, and electronic reminders facilitated by a Discharge Liaison.
- A literature review was conducted and Project RED was selected to as the methodology approach due to the focus on health literacy and well examined tools.

Applying health literacy to improve the rate of post-hospital follow-up
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Percent of Appointment No Shows

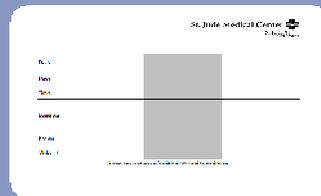


Our Goal

- To reduce the number of appointment “no shows” and unnecessary hospital readmissions/emergency department visits.

Implications

- Prior to the intervention, the hospital only provided patients with a PHV appointment date and time prior to discharge and used this as the defining metric.
- This resulted in an increase in the “no show” rate. Lack of open communication with the patient and caregiver most likely contributed to this outcome.
- It is only when the hospital addressed patient literacy and focused on the “no show” outcome metric that improvements were seen.
- Although patient satisfaction was not a part of the defining metrics, there was consistent patient feedback that the new process was very helpful and diminished any adverse interactions with the medical offices from the patient’s perspective.



Outcomes

- The program was implemented for a 12 month period.
- With a initial baseline of 15% “no show” rate, the program demonstrated a dramatic decrease to < 5% in the first few months; then sustained an additional decrease to < 2 % over the final months.
- The program demonstrated an 87% decrease in PHV “no shows”.