Transitional Care verses Continuity

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Objective

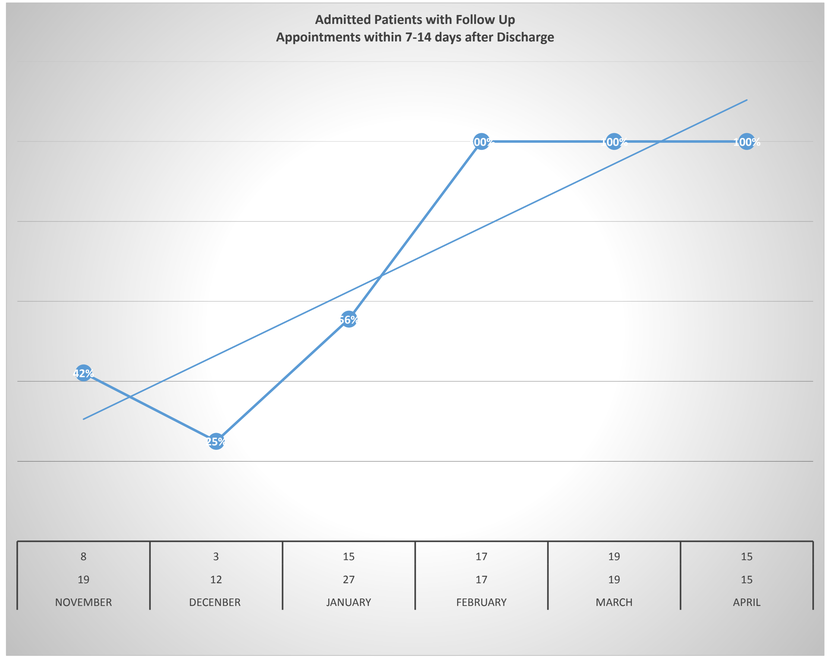
Lamar Medical Center wanted to provide adequate transitional care to the patients discharged from the University Health Hospital in an effort to decrease readmissions.

Background

Transitional care encompasses a broad range of services and environments designed to promote the safe and timely passage of patients between levels of health care and across care settings. High-quality transitional care is especially important for older adults with multiple chronic conditions and complex therapeutic regimens, as well as for their family caregivers. Poor communication, incomplete transfer of information, inadequate education of older adults and their family caregivers, limited access to essential services, and the absence of a single point person to ensure continuity of care all contribute. Evidence shows that breakdowns in care are linked to adverse events, low satisfaction with care, and high rehospitalization rates.

Actions Taken

1. Met with Lamar Medical practice staff to evaluate the current process.
2. Reviewed the current reporting options with the E.H.R vendor
3. Designed a report with the E.H.R. vendor to identify admitted/discharged patients by their primary care physician
4. Designed the hospital discharge follow-up process
5. Implemented the report to identify admitted/discharge patients
6. Observed the workflow
7. Sustained the improvement



Analysis

As partners with the University Health Hospital, Lamar Medical Center (LMC) committed to upholding the hospitals policy of providing follow up appointments for their discharged patients within 7-14 days after discharge. LMC collaborated with their E.H.R provider (Epic) to optimize its reporting capability, which allowed them the opportunity to identify discharged patients daily. Through community collaboration Lamar Medical Center was able to successfully improve communications amongst partners, improve quality thru E.H.R optimization, and increase their continuity of care efforts by 58%.

Next Steps

Lamar Medical Center will continue to monitor, track, and sustain the continuity of care to reduce the hospital readmission rate and provide better patient care. The goal is to continue to be successful in order to share their evidence-based processes with other primary care community partners.

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