Choose Wisely Campaign Brings Together Physicians and Patients

Every day, crucial conversations between physicians and patients take place, discussing the medical options relating to the needs of that patient. The physician is striving to provide the safe, high-quality care that patient deserves. The patient is looking for the best care and options, based on their needs, from their healthcare expert.

As this era of healthcare constantly adds new standards of delivery options and best practices, these crucial conversations shape the way physicians and patients move forward.

The concept of Choosing Wisely® looks at these crucial conversations between physicians and patients and encouraging an effective care choice to be made. Created in 2012, Choosing Wisely is an initiative of the American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM) focused on encouraging physicians and patients to be aware of medical tests and procedures that may be unnecessary and in some instances cause harm.

Recognizing the importance of physicians and patients working together, the nation’s leading specialty societies, along with Consumer Reports, have joined Choosing Wisely to help improve the quality and safety of health care. Each participating specialty society created a list of “Things Physicians and Patients Should Question” that provide specific, evidence-based recommendations physicians and patients should use to make effective and safe decisions on the most appropriate care based on their specific situation.

To further deploy Choosing Wisely across the nation, the ABIM Foundation awarded 21 recipients of Choosing Wisely grants to regional health collaboratives, medical associations, and specialty societies earlier this spring. The Iowa Healthcare Collaborative (IHC) was awarded the 2013-2014 grant to further advance the recommendations and concepts across Iowa. As the current Chair of the IHC Board of Directors, I am encouraged to hear about these efforts in our state.

Over the next two years, information and resources for this initiative will be presented in various opportunities for Iowa physicians and communities. IHC will partner with local physician groups, payers, hospitals, and statewide organizations to look at opportunities unique to Iowa providers for overutilization and high radiation exposure.

There has been an increased focus on patient engagement as of late. The concept of Choosing Wisely defines a standard of care for physicians to embrace and encourages the patient to have these crucial conversations about their care. Visit www.ihconline.org for more information on Choosing Wisely.

-Dr. Jeff Maire, Iowa Healthcare Collaborative Board Chair and Surgeon in Polk County