

PROJECT TITLE: Stop Light Education Pathways - Using standardized discharge education across the continuum of care to reduce readmissions

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The Problem:

Patients at St. Vincent's Healthcare are discharged with multiple pages of discharge instructions. Hospital discharge instructions are not standardized across the continuum of care and therefore patients receive different education from providers in different care settings. Available education materials are lengthy and unclear to patients. Hospital readmissions rates are impacted by patients who lack an understanding of their diagnosis, warning signs, and fail to seek help in a timely manner.

Project Goals:

Standardize patient discharge education through a unified approach across the continuum of care and decrease readmissions of BPCI patients by 10% over 90 days post implementation.

Actions Taken:

Prior to Implementation

- Identified three high impact and high risk re-admission diagnosis for a target group of patients: CHF, COPD and Sepsis (Cellulitis and PNA)
- Identified a focus population: Medicare BPCI patients admitted to the hospitalist service and being treated for CHF, COPD, cellulitis, PNA, or sepsis.
- Researched evidence based warning signs and built simple one page "STOP LIGHT" education pathways that patients, PCP's, and Home Health providers can use to manage CHF, COPD, and SEPSIS diagnosis. *(See Figure 1)*
- Meet with Care Management, PCP's, Specialists, and Home Health to share pathways and streamline educational materials.
- The Chief Hospitalist presented education materials and engaged PCPs.
- HRN and TCRN shared patient education pathways with RN care managers to align and incorporate the Stop Light education pathways into educational materials being used.

After Nov 1st, 2016 Implementation

- HRN and TCRN utilized the Readmissions Diagnostic Tool from the Knowledge Center on all BPCI patients readmitted to the hospital with the three high impact diagnoses to track and identify reason for readmission.
- Target BPCI patients and use TCRN to do real-time education at bedside.
- TCRN emails a copy of the educational material ("Stop Light") to the Admissions Coordinator of patients discharging to SNFs.
- HRN and TCRN track how many BPCI patients are readmitted with the three high impact diagnosis.

Results:

We analyzed 30 day readmission rates for all of the BPCI patient population. Our baseline period was September 1, 2016 through November 30, 2016 (n=75). Our comparison period was December 1, 2016 through February 28, 2017 (n=109). In the comparison group there was a 16.25% decrease in readmission of all BPCI patients (22.6% vs 6.42%, p=0.003). *(See Graph 1)*

Lessons Learned:

- Simplifying patient education materials to a one page “Stop Light” format helped patients understand what signs and symptoms to watch for.
- Streamlining education materials across the continuum of care helped patients receive the same education.
- Cardiology Specialist Clinics asked us to share educational materials on CHF so they could use them for their patients.
- Educational Materials were not easily loaded into My Chart at St. Vincent’s and CI team still working on resolving this issue.
- TCRN learned that the education material became a simple check list for RN and care managers to do at bedside with the patients.
- The “Stop Light” education tool is low cost and patient friendly intervention that was easily integrated into the TCRN discharge education workflow. It significantly impacted the readmission rate for BPCI patients at St. Vincent Healthcare.
- We recommended developing additional “Stop Light” education materials for other BPCI diagnosis and further testing the impact on readmission.

Figure 1: Heart Failure Stop Light

HEART FAILURE Know Your Symptoms



| Green Zone: All Clear | Green Zone Means: |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No shortness of breath ▪ No swelling ▪ No weight gain ▪ No chest pain ▪ No decrease in your ability to maintain your activity level | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Your symptoms are under control ▪ Continue taking your medications as prescribed by your doctor ▪ Continue checking your daily weight ▪ Follow a low salt diet ▪ Keep all your doctor appointments |
| Yellow Zone: Caution | Yellow Zone Means: |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Weight gain of 3 pounds in one day or 5 pounds over a week ▪ Increased cough ▪ Increased swelling of the abdomen or lower body ▪ Difficulty sleeping ▪ Increase in shortness of breath with activity ▪ Any other unusual symptoms bothering you | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Your symptoms may indicate that you need an adjustment of your medications. <p>Call your doctor, nurse coordinator, or home health nurse.</p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Number: _____</p> <p>Instructions: _____</p> <p>_____</p> |
| <p>Call your doctor if you are going into the YELLOW zone.</p> | |
| Red Zone: Medical Alert | Red Zone Means: |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Unrelieved shortness of breath ▪ Unrelieved chest discomfort ▪ Wheezing chest tightness at rest ▪ Unable to sleep or lie flat ▪ Increased discomfort or swelling of the lower body ▪ Weight gain of more than 5 pounds in two days ▪ Increased or new confusion or disorientation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This indicates that you need to be evaluated by a doctor right away <p>Call your doctor or 911 immediately if you are going into the RED zone!</p> |

Graph 1: BPCI 30 Day Readmission Rate

