BACKGROUND

- Providing an After Visit Summary (AVS) has been shown to increase patient satisfaction in the primary care setting.
- Individualized instructions enhance patients’ understanding of their treatment plan and encourages self-management of chronic diseases.
- While provision of AVS is designated “meaningful use” criteria for electronic medical records (EMR), alternative AVS forms have not been well described in the literature.

OBJECTIVES

- Develop a written AVS for an outpatient community-based clinic.
- Increase percentage of patients that receive written instructions from 73% to 95%.
- Increase percentage of patients who are satisfied overall with their understanding of care plan from 81% to 95%.

AVS DEVELOPMENT

1. Clinic staff and providers surveyed to identify baseline standards and key content areas to include in an AVS.
2. Patients completed pre-AVS survey to establish baseline practices of written communication and understanding of treatment plan.
3. Prototype AVS created, revised and piloted to determine ease of use.
4. Final AVS distributed to all clinic providers including 5 internal medicine attendings, 12 internal medicine residents, and 1 nurse practitioner trainee.
5. Patients completed post-AVS survey for program evaluation.

RESULTS

Figure 1: Patient survey regarding whether treatment plan was communicated during visit.

Figure 2: Patient survey regarding preferred method of communication of treatment plan.

Figure 3: Patient survey regarding understanding of treatment plan, pre and post-AVS implementation.

Figure 4: Provider survey regarding how often written instructions were provided to patients.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Development of an AVS requires provider and staff input for key content areas, ease of use, and feasibility.
- Implementation of efficient written AVSs can occur outside of EMR systems to improve patient understanding.
- Some patients may paradoxically become more aware of gaps in their understanding of the treatment plan when provided a written AVS.

CONCLUSIONS

Outpatient community clinics can create efficient and effective AVSs to improve patient satisfaction with their understanding of treatment plans.

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