

Triumph out of Tribulation

Wattles Park Family Practice – Integrated Health Partners

Summary

Wattles Park Family Practice is a private practice with one physician and one physician assistant, which experienced many changes in 2016 making the transition into 2017 one full of trials and tribulation. Under new leadership, the practice embraced this time as an opportunity for improvement.

After reviewing data provided to Wattles Park Family Practice by their physician organization (PO), Integrated Health Partners, the practice began assessing current processes for meeting evidence based guidelines.

Evidence Based Interventions (EBIs)

Wattles Park Family Practice focused on the following EBIs:

Provider Assessment and Feedback

- First, the practice hired a Quality Improvement (QI) Specialist. The practice also recognized the importance of team-based care and the impact of each staff person in reaching their goals.

Client Reminders

- Through use of self-created registry sheets, the staff flagged preventive screenings the patients needed and used these sheets to conduct outreach to patients to alert them to screenings and services.
- Through collaboration and assistance from the PO, the QI Specialist received training on how to utilize health plan web portals, data mining charts, basic disease process and HEDIS education, and how to use gaps in care lists to identify patients for outreach.

Challenges

One challenge was due to a transition at the PO level from one registry to another and the issues associated with creating a new interface. Without access to patient summary sheets from the registry, the practice created registry sheets to use at the point of care which alerted the medical assistants and providers of care needs.

Solutions

The practice administrator worked around registry issues and created standard processes and also trained staff on proper verbiage when contacting patients regarding their gaps in care. For patients who were resistant, the doctor was asked to talk to the patient. Another best practice developed was to have care managers address preventive care needs during encounters with patients. This allowed them time to discuss the importance of colorectal cancer screening and other preventive care and helped address any barriers to screening. Patients are told they can take Fecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT) kits to the lab rather than the office. The care team also ensures tracking and follow-up after tests are given.

Successes

The practice now provides additional education and options to patients who refuse a colonoscopy. In one example, a patient who had previously refused a colonoscopy finally agreed after further education. Unfortunately this patient was diagnosed with colon cancer and is in treatment. Several other patients with a positive FOBT are now following up with a colonoscopy.

Sustaining the Success

Wattles Park Family Practice will continue to utilize and monitor health plan data to drive quality improvement efforts. With the use of a data dashboard provided by the PO, the practice is able to monitor progress toward evidence based care monthly. The practice will also continue focusing on team-based care.

Results

At the beginning of the grant period, Wattles Park Family Practice's aggregate colorectal cancer screening score for their two largest payers was 59.5 percent. At the end of the grant period, the practice's score had increased to 71 percent.

Organization Contact: Gwen Henry, RN, BSN, Practice Administrator, ghenry@wattlespark.com

