

NICU Discharge Follow Up Phone Calls

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BACKGROUND

Post-discharge follow-up phone calls are essential in supporting the patient/family/caregiver from discharge until the first follow-up appointment (AHRQ, 2013).

Discharge phone calls benefit both the patient/family/caregiver as well as the hospital with literature supporting the discharge phone call as a positive experience from both patients/families/caregivers and nurses (Schuller, Lin, Gamm & Edwardson, 2015).

Discharge phone calls should be made within two to three days but no more than 72 hours after discharge (AHRQ, 2013; Press Ganey, 2020)

Discharge phone calls should be done by nursing personnel to allow for questions, clearing up any misunderstandings, discrepancies in the discharge plan to be identified and addressed, and allow for recognition of any health care providers the patient/family/caregiver would like to address (AHRQ, 2013; Press Ganey, 2020).

The Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) was looking for ways to improve their discharge process and determined that one technique they could implement to improve quality and continuity of care was the implementing discharge follow up phone calls.

PURPOSE

- To provide support to patient/family/caregiver following discharge from UMC NICU within 72 hours.
- To reduce readmission rates and increase patient satisfaction for our most vulnerable patients.
- To be going to collect data for National Database of Nursing Quality Indicators (NDNQI: Patient Contacts Indicator)

METHODS

The Advance Nurse Extern/Pediatric Clinical Nurse Specialist, NICU Manager, and NICU nursing staff worked collaboratively in developing the process for discharge phone calls using the Agency for Healthcare Research, and Quality (AHRQ) re-engineered discharge (RED) toolkit as a guide and following the Plan Do Study Act (PDSA) methodology.

- NICU Managers reviewed the RED toolkit's eleven steps on "how to begin implementation of re-engineered discharge at your hospital" (AHRQ, 2013)
- It was determined that NICU nurses assigned to couplet care or nurses working only four hours would be assigned to discharge follow-up phone calls
- NICU Managers obtained buy-in from key stakeholders from nursing and physician services, as well as other interprofessional team members
- Developed discharge follow up questions (two PDSA Cycles)
- Developed discharge phone call log (two PDSA Cycles)
- Developed discharge follow up phone call Electronic Medical Record (EMR)/EPIC documentation process for nurses (two PDSA Cycle)
- Educated staff of Discharge Phone Call Process
- Began NICU Discharge Phone calls on May 5, 2020

FOLLOW-UP CALL QUESTIONS - NICU

We just wanted to ask you a few questions about your stay to help improve our care in the NICU.

- How is baby? Do you have any concerns with his/her health?
- Do you have any questions regarding your discharge instructions?
Yes- refer to electronic discharge summary to review with patient. If they still have questions refer to pediatrician.
- Do you have an appointment scheduled with your pediatrician?
No- refer to electronic discharge summary. Provide phone number to LIED clinic.
- If applicable- Do you have the medication that was prescribed on discharge?
a. No? Do you need any help getting your prescriptions filled?
b. Did you receive enough education on your discharge meds?
- If applicable - Did you get your referral to Nevada Early Intervention Services?
No- do you need that phone number again?
- If applicable- Has the home health agency been in contact with you?
No- Contact case manager for patient
- Do you have any questions or comments for us?
- Are there any nurses or physicians you would like to recognize?

09/01/2020

NICU discharge Phone call excel workbook

DC Date & Time	Phone Call Date & Time	Hours between DC and Phone Call
5/5/2020 16:15	5/7/2020 8:45	40
5/8/2020 11:30	5/11/2020 19:30	74
5/8/2020 11:30	5/11/2020 15:50	75
5/9/2020 11:58	5/11/2020 16:30	52
5/11/2020 18:00	5/11/2020 9:25	211
5/12/2020 14:00	5/12/2020 10:00	211
5/12/2020 15:00	5/12/2020 10:15	211
5/12/2020 11:45	5/12/2020 10:25	214
5/13/2020 14:00	5/12/2020 10:40	188
5/13/2020 18:15	5/12/2020 10:50	184
5/13/2020 17:30	5/12/2020 10:40	215
5/14/2020 18:00	5/17/2020 9:50	65
5/17/2020 15:25	5/20/2020 11:15	67
5/19/2020 15:30	5/20/2020 11:09	29
5/19/2020 11:15	5/22/2020 17:15	77
5/19/2020 11:40	5/22/2020 17:30	77
5/20/2020 11:55	5/22/2020 17:22	77
5/20/2020 12:50	5/22/2020 17:55	55
5/20/2020 15:55	5/22/2020 17:43	49
5/22/2020 14:30	5/27/2020 13:00	119
5/23/2020 12:50	5/27/2020 11:15	94
5/23/2020 14:45	5/27/2020 14:35	95
5/20/2020 12:30	5/27/2020 11:20	107
5/23/2020 16:35	5/27/2020 11:50	90
5/23/2020 17:15	5/27/2020 14:20	93
5/25/2020 12:45	5/27/2020 14:40	49
5/25/2020 14:50	5/29/2020 17:30	98

Discharge Phone Call Log

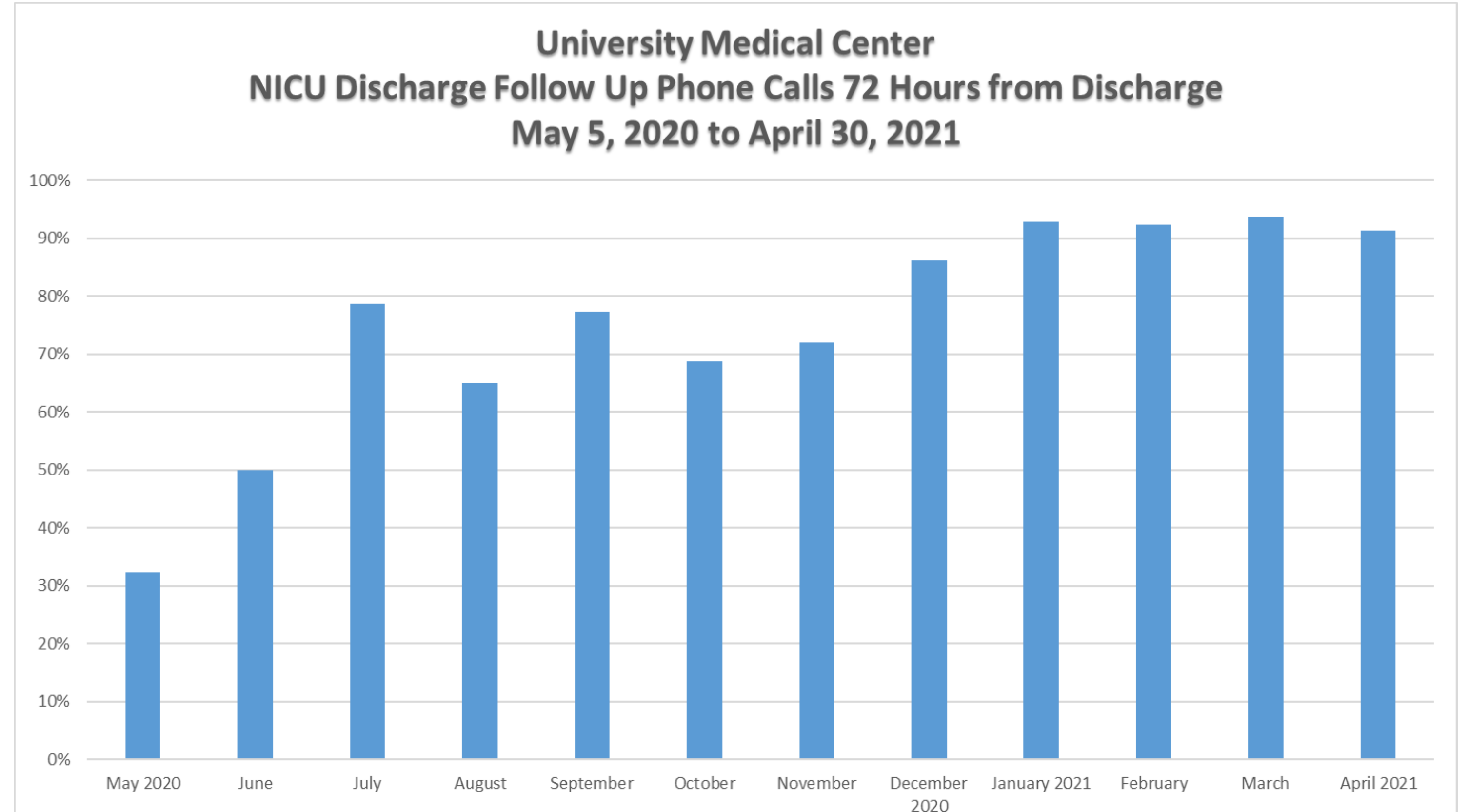
Patient Label	DC Date & Time	Phone Call Date & Time	Interpreter required	No. Ans	Left msg	Question	NA	Yes	No	Comment
	REQUIRED	REQUIRED	Y/N			1				
						2				
						3				
						4a				
						4b				
						5				
						6				
						7				
						8				

Discharge Follow Up Phone Call EPIC Process

- Go to patient lookup
- Enter patient's medical record number into the Name/MRN box
- You are now in "Chart Review". Find and select "call patient" from the tabs listed

RESULTS

- Follow up discharge phone calls in the NICU were initiated on May 5, 2020
- Discharge phone calls were designated as part of the couplet care nurse's daily responsibilities
- Discharge phone call reminders are a routine part of daily huddle
- 365 discharges from the NICU during this 12 months PDSA cycle
- 97% of patients discharged from the NICU received a phone contact by NDNQI standards
- 12-month average shows 75% of phone calls were made within 72 hours of discharge, with the last four (4) months successfully achieving 90% or higher
- Chart audits reveal 100% of Discharge Phone Calls are documented in the EMR
- Increase in ICare4U recognition awards based on feedback obtained from the discharge phone call question "are there any nurses or physicians you would like to recognize"



CONCLUSION

- Once the workflow was established, couplet care nurses were trained, and the process hardwired the goal of calling within 72 hours reached sustainability of 90% and higher within eight (8) months.
- NICU is ready to report data for the NDNQI: Patient Contacts Indicator when the organization determines the start date for data collection.
- While no formal survey has been completed, staff verbalize that the discharge follow-up phone calls are a positive addition to their discharge process.
- For 2022 the authors will complete another PDSA Cycle to add tracking and trending of near misses after discharges such as missed follow up appointments, discharge medication questions, or feeding questions to continue to improve the NICU Discharge Process

REFERENCES

- AHRQ. (2013, March). Re-Engineered Discharge (RED) Toolkit. Rockville, MD, USA. Retrieved from <https://www.ahrq.gov/sites/default/files/publications/files/redtoolkit.pdf>
- Press Ganey. (2020, January). Guidelines for data collection and submission on patient contacts indicators. Retrieved from <https://members.nursingquality.org>
- Schuller, K. A., Lin, S., Gamm, L. D., & Edwardson, N. (2015). Discharge phone calls: A technique to improve patient care during the transition from hospital to home. *Journal of Healthcare Quality*, 37(3), 163-172.

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