

Improving Discharge Instruction in Primary Care

Lady Dianne Hann, BSN, RN, Ambulatory Clinic Sunset Charge Nurse and
Kathryn Marsh, MBA, BSN, RN, Ambulatory Clinic Manager

BACKGROUND

The IDEAL discharge process can significantly show improvements in the efficacy of the discharge process (Luther, Wilson, Kranz & Krahulec, 2019). IDEAL stands for Include, Discuss, Educate, Assess and Listen which are the five major components that focused on engaging patients and caregivers in the discharge process (Luther, Wilson, Kranz & Krahulec, 2019). Improving patients' understanding is likely to improve health outcomes and avoid unnecessary healthcare utilization and costs (Coleman *et al*, 2013). Notably, patients and caregivers who are better equipped to care for themselves at home, reported being more satisfied with the care received (Bull, Hansen & Gross, 2000).

UMC Ambulatory Sunset clinic chose to improve discharge instructions in primary care as of their process improvement project for 2022.

HYPOTHESIS

If you educate primary care nurses on how to improve discharge instructions with a discharge checklist, then patients would understand their plan of care which will decrease the number of in-basket messages and increase patient satisfaction as evidence by increase in Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) scores.

GOALS

- Decrease in the number of patients with questions regarding discharge instructions
- Higher patient compliance
- Reduction of in-basket messages and nurse call-backs
- Improvement in CAHPS scores from previous quarter to the following quarter with discharge improvement process

IDEAL Discharge Planning

Include the patient and family as full partners in the discharge planning process.

Discuss with the patient and family five key areas to prevent problems at home:

1. Describe what life at home will be like
2. Review medications
3. Highlight warning signs and problems
4. Explain test results
5. Make follow up appointments

Educate the patient and family in plain language about the patient's condition, the discharge process, and next steps throughout the hospital stay.

Assess how well doctors and nurses explain the diagnosis, condition, and next steps in the patient's care to the patient and family and use teach back.

Listen to and honor the patient's and family's goals, preferences, observations, and concerns.



- ✓ Instruct patient to make appointments for follow up appointments
- ✓ Plan for the follow-up appointment of results from pending lab and/or imaging tests
- ✓ Review medications (new medications vs discontinued medications), dose, frequency, route and what the medication is used for
- ✓ Remind patient of the number of refills given and how to call pharmacy to request refill
- ✓ Nurse verifies that patient's pharmacy is correct
- ✓ Educate the patient about diagnoses
- ✓ Inform patient about Referrals and the referral process
- ✓ Instruct patient on Labs that need to be done (blood work that require fasting)
- ✓ Inform patient to bring printed orders to patient's appointment for tests
- ✓ If patient needs Medical Clearance for Surgery, all Pre-op labs and tests need to be completed in a timely manner so Primary Care Provider can write Medical Clearance Letter.
- ✓ Patient should provide their surgeon's fax number and any forms needed
- ✓ Inform patient on how to access **UMC Connect website** <https://umconnect.umcsn.com/mychart/Authentication/Login> or **MyChart by EPIC App**
- ✓ Chart Review, Medications, Test orders (Labs, Imaging), Letters, and Referrals

METHODS

The Plan Do Study Act (PDSA) template will be used to design and carry out improving discharge instructions in primary care. Analyze the CAHPS data to assess what worked, what didn't work. Gather data from Epic regarding the number of in-basket messages during that specific timeframe. Incorporate key elements of the IDEAL Discharge Planning Overview, Process, and Checklist from Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality.

Project will start July 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022 at UMC Sunset Primary Care Clinic, 525 Marks St, Henderson, NV 89014. Will use the third quarter CAHPS scores as the baseline. Educate primary care nurses on how to improve the discharge process and implementation of the discharge checklist during the month of September 2022. Analyze the data and CAHPS scores in 2023.

REFERENCES

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