The Importance of Empowering Your Patients

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Objectives

• Compare and contrast patient empowerment and patient engagement
• List four principles of patient engagement
• Identify two components needed to increase patient empowerment

The Untapped Team Member

Patient Empowerment, Engagement & Patient Centered Care

• Buzz words?
• Or a commitment to change our culture?

September 9, 2012 Forbes headline:
“Patient Engagement is the Blockbuster Drug of the Century”


Old Blockbuster Drugs...

• Statins are a requirement of Meaningful Use Stage 1 clinical quality measures, and a key measure for the CMS hospital quality measures.
  – Prescribing statins, in many instances, is no longer optional.
• Eric Topol states that “of every 100 patients taking Lipitor to prevent a heart attack one patient was helped, 99 were not.”
  – These drugs cost $4 per day per patient and $1500 per year.
  – Great at lowering cholesterol, it remains unclear that they do much to prevent heart attacks.

New Blockbuster Idea...

Compare use of statins with a 2009 Kaiser study of coordinated cardiac care:

• Coordinated care “patients have an 88 percent reduced risk of dying of a cardiac-related cause when enrolled within 90 days of a heart attack, compared to those not in the program.”
• “Clinical care teams reduced overall mortality by 76 percent and cardiac mortality by 73 percent.”

Topol, E. “The Creative Destruction of Medicine”

Engaged or Empowered?

Empowerment Vs. Engagement

- **Patient Engagement:** “Actions individuals must take to obtain the greatest benefit from the health care services available to them.”

Empowerment vs. Engagement: Two Sides to the Same Coin

Another View: Patient Activation Measure (PAM)

To be active partners in their care, patients must:
1. Believe the patient role is important (*Engagement, supportive culture*)
2. Have the confidence, knowledge, and other resources necessary to take action (*Health literacy, supportive culture*)

Another View: Patient Activation Measure (PAM)

To be active partners in their care, patients must:
3. Actually take action to maintain and improve one’s health (*Empowerment*)
4. Stay the course even under stress (*Supportive culture*)
The Case for Patient Engagement

Control: Who really makes the decisions that drive outcomes

ARE THERE ANY GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR PATIENT ENGAGEMENT?

Principles of Patient Engagement

1. Dynamic partnership
2. Patients:
   – Best source of information
   – Make their own decisions about care
3. Responsibilities and accountabilities are shared

Principles of Patient Engagement

4. Boundaries are respected (privacy, decision making, ethical behavior)
5. Confidentiality, defined by the patient, is respected
6. Desire and ability to engage is not static; diversity is acknowledged and appreciated

Principles of Patient Engagement

7. Nurses must advocate for patients who are unable to participate fully
8. Engagement includes information sharing, consensus building and mutual decision making
9. Health literacy is a critical component of successful patient engagement

How can we measure patient engagement?

What sorts of activities do engaged patients demonstrate?
Engagement Behavior Framework

- Find safe, decent care
- Communicate with health care professionals
- Make good treatment decisions
- Participate in treatment


Markers of Patient Engagement

- Feel safe questioning a medication that doesn’t look familiar or
- Will inform the clinician when they cannot afford the medication prescribed.
- Remain integrated into society and the workforce.

From the Patient’ Perspective

As an empowered patient, you’ll need to:

- Take responsibility.
  - You know your body best
  - Refer to all the resources available: people and print
  - Use that knowledge to help make decisions about your treatment.

Empowered Patients

- Set goals.
  - Set a treatment goal and work toward that goal.
    - A goal to heal
    - A goal to manage a disease or condition,
    - A goal to learn to cope with a new medical problem.

Empowered Patients

- Collaborate with others.
  - Be an active participant on your own healthcare team.

Empowered Patients

- Gather evidence.
  - Record symptoms and family histories,
  - Participate in medical tests,
  - Have discussions with providers and other patients,
  - Use the Internet and libraries for research.
Empowered Patients

• Are smart healthcare consumers: customer service and costs may be at issue
  – Understand your health insurance choices
  – Learn how to ask for a change of practitioner

Empowered Patients

• Stay safe in the healthcare environment.
  – Know your own treatment plan and be aware of health safety risks: medication errors, breaks in infection control, unnecessary hospitalization.

Finally, Empowered Patients

• Adhere to decisions.
  – Since you will have actively participated in the decision making, you will feel confident following the plan you have made with your health care team.

Patient Engagement: Critical For Success

• We can’t improve clinical outcomes of people with chronic illnesses (aka ESRD) unless those people (patients) are engaged in the daily management of their conditions
• Requires a shift from transaction-based healthcare to relationship-based model

Let’s Talk About John*

• 19 year old male
• Admitted to ER with blood glucose of 800
• In hospital 3 days
• Seen and educated by ER physicians, pediatricians, nurses, nurse practitioners, hospital social workers and diabetic educators
• Smiles pleasantly, and says he has no questions
• Asked to calculate dose of insulin to cover a meal of pasta and salad...

What They Missed... *

• John has a developmental cognitive disability
• He lives in a group home
• He works part-time at a pizzeria
• He has a history of alcohol abuse.
• His girlfriend’s name is tattooed on his forearm; they’ve been together for three years
• No one assessed John’s health literacy, reading level or math skills
"When people like John keep turning up in our ERs with diabetes-related emergencies, we will label them noncompliant frequent flyers, rather than looking at our own culpability."

Engagement Requires

Assessment

Culture that is patient-centered, not task focused

Patient Engagement & Plans of Care

- The IDT needs to focus more on patient defined metrics such as “can I walk around the block?”
- “It’s about getting to a plan of care that actually makes the most sense for the patient. It is not about increasing compliance with what the physician prescribed.”* 

Patient Engagement

Think about it...
- What are the barriers to increasing your patient’s engagement in their care?
- What is one step you can take this week to begin addressing a barrier?

Worth Change? YES

- When patients become more informed about their health, they may make better decisions, modify their behavior, and require fewer health care services.
- Greater patient engagement has the potential to reduce readmissions.

Worth Change? YES

- Improving a person’s ability to understand and manage his or her own health and disease, negotiate with different cadres of health professionals, and navigate the complexities of health systems is crucial to achieving better health outcomes (think QIP...)

Remember...

- “The provider must not continue as if it’s their territory and the patient is a visitor, rather than a partner in their care.”
  » Beverly Malone PhD, RN
  CEO of National League for Nursing

- “We are guests in their lives.”
  » Don Berwick MD
  Former CMS Administrator

THANKS FOR THE WORK YOU DO!

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