DETERMINING THE RESPONSE TIME OF SECONDARY CARE PHYSICIANS, WHEN SENDING BACK REFERRAL REPORTS

GE-National Medical Fellowships – Primary Care Leadership Program 2013
Background

- Primary Care Demographic
  - 50% of physicians during WWII
  - Less than 30% of physicians today

- Over the past 10 years do you think that communication between GPs and consultants has:
From your experience, is patient care suffering due to communication difficulties between primary and secondary care?

“In each country, only a minority of primary care doctors reported always receiving timely information from specialists to whom they have referred patients” (Schoen, C. & Osborn, R., 2013).
Goal

- Create a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the response time of secondary care physicians, when sending back referral reports to the primary care staff at the Orange Blossom Family Health Center.
Methodology

- A report containing the total amount of referrals was acquired via the Electronic Health Records system (EHR).
- Sample from August 2012 – March 2013
Methodology

- Using the EHR system
  - Search for patient using their name and referral date
  - Patient’s actual referral can be found under the “order tab”
  - Verify the appointment date under the “appointments tab”

- Go to the “imaging tab” to search for the following information.
  - Secondary Care Physician Appointment
  - Appointment Completed Date
  - Date Primary Care Receives Report
Tools

- Company computer with access to the Electronic Health Records
- EHR Referral report
Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Statistics</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Age</td>
<td>51.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation (Age)</td>
<td>11.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Min Age</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max Age</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Gender**
- Male: 231
- Female: 142

**Race**
- Asian: 5
- Black: 71
- Hispanic: 2
- Indian: 9
- Other: 76
- White: 29

**Insured vs. Uninsured Patients**
- Insured: 226
- Uninsured: 147
### Data Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Number of Patients</th>
<th>Not Completed</th>
<th>Completed</th>
<th>Mental &amp; HOPE Team</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>373</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Pie chart showing distribution of total patients by completion status and team assignments.]

- **Not Completed**: 271
- **Completed**: 76
- **Mental & HOPE Team**: 26
Number of Completed Referrals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Within 60</th>
<th>After 60</th>
<th>Average Days</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Completed Referrals</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Within 60 Days**: 58 referrals
- **After 60 Days**: 18 referrals
- **Average Days**: 46
Results Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Referrals that were Not Completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DNKA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- DNKA: 74.2%
- DNQ: 6.3%
- Refused Service: 10.3%
- Patient hasn't been back: 0.4%
- Reason Unknown: 8.9%
## Insured vs. Uninsured Patients

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<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Insured</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uninsured</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Insured vs. Uninsured

- **Uninsured:**
  - Not Completed: 159
  - Completed: 52
  - Mental: 15

- **Insured:**
  - Not Completed: 117
  - Completed: 24

![Bar chart showing comparison between insured and uninsured patients](chart.png)
## Insured vs. Uninsured Patients

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### Insured vs. Uninsured

- **Insured**:
  - Not Completed: 16.3%
  - Completed: 79.6%
- **Uninsured**:
  - Not Completed: 10.2%
  - Completed: 70.4%
  - Mental: 23.0%

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### Diagram

- Not Completed
- Completed
- Mental
### Results Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Insured vs. Uninsured Patients</th>
<th>Completed Referrals</th>
<th>Average Number of Days it took to Complete a Referral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of Referrals Within 60 Days</td>
<td>Number of Referrals After 60 Days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insured</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uninsured</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Insured vs. Uninsured Completed Referrals**

- **Within 60 Days**
  - Insured: 22
  - Uninsured: 36
- **After 60 Days**
  - Insured: 2
  - Uninsured: 16
- **Average # of Days**
  - Insured: 38
  - Uninsured: 49

![Bar chart showing the comparison between insured and uninsured patients in terms of completed referrals within and after 60 days, along with the average number of days it took to complete a referral.](chart.png)
Results Continued

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Discussion

- The Numbers
  - 271 had uncompleted referrals (73%)
  - 76 had completed referrals (20%)
  - 26 were patients (7%) referred for psychiatric reasons or to the HOPE Team

- The data showed an increased percentage of the uninsured population having their referrals completed (23% vs. 16.3%).

- Problem Area
  - Lack of standardization
  - Lack of referral tracking
  - Communication between all parties in the referral process
In conclusion, it appears that no definitive assessment can be made about the referral process until the tracking and standardization portion has been addressed. At this time, there are too many variables in play to make an accurate assessment on the referral process between insured vs. uninsured patients, and whether or not secondary care physician are returning referrals in a timely manner.
Recommendations

- The center should use the datasheet as a good starting point to create a comprehensive referral list.
- Standardize the incoming documentation process
Acknowledgements

- The entire Orange Blossom Family Health Center
- Dr. Leonardo Oliveira
- GE-NMF Primary Care Leadership Program