Assessing Registration, Enrollment, and Use of HealthPoint's Patient Portal
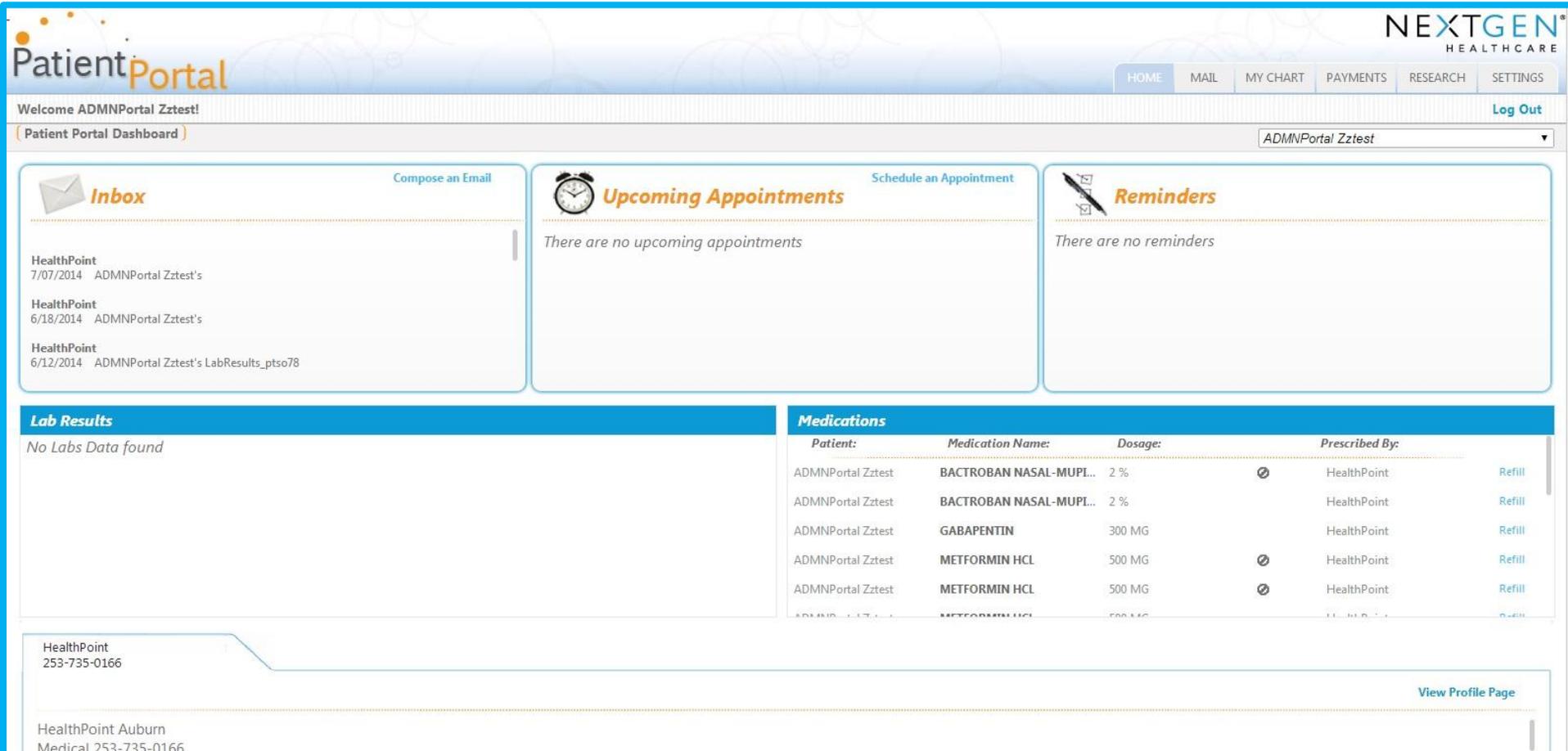
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HealthPoint Community Health Centers

Seattle, WA

Introduction

HealthPoint
Your Community Health Center

- Meaningful Use Represents $700,000 (1%) of 2014 Revenue Budget

- Reporting Period begins Oct. 1

- Stage 2 Core Objective 17

- Whites more likely enroll than other races (Goel et. al, 2010).

- Whites, English speakers, and those with private insurance or Medicaid (vs. uninsured) more likely to be repeat users of a patient portal (Ancker et. al, 2010).

Use Secure Electronic Messaging	
Objective	Use secure electronic messaging to communicate with patients on relevant health information.
Measure	A secure message was sent using the electronic messaging function of CEHRT by more than 5 percent of unique patients (or their authorized representatives) seen by the EP during the EHR reporting period.

Methodology

- Retrospective Analysis of Data from Portal and EHR Databases

  - Inclusion criteria: Patients 18+ years old with at least one visit between 2012 and 2014

  - Obtain Data for Sex, Age, Race, Financial Class, Income, and Message Content

- Main Measures:

 (a) Registration for the portal: How many patients were given a token?

 (b) Enrollment in the portal: How many patients actually enrolled or were enrolled?

 (c) Use of the portal: How many patients sent at least one message to their provider?

 (d) Message Content: What kind of information is conveyed over the portal?

Results

Total Population: N = 51,915
 - Mainly women (61.4%) and younger than 50 (68.2%)
 - Predominately white (37.9%) and Hispanic (29.1%)
 - Have mainly Medicaid (38.1%) or self-pay (37.8%)
 - Median Income: $15,290

Registration

N = 10,003 (19.3%)

Women (21.1%)

50-64 year olds (20.2%)

 - 12.3% of 65+

Whites (24.8%)

Private and Medicaid (~25% each)

 - Self-pay at 14.3%

Enrollment

N = 7372 (73.7%)

Women (74.6%)

50-64 year olds (76.5%)

Other (76.3%) and Blacks (76.0%)

 - Hispanics with the lowest (72.2%)

Medicaid (79.6%)

 - Self-pay (65.9%) and other public (48.4%) with the lowest

Send Message

N = 1680 (22.8%)

 3.2% of total population

No difference based on sex

50+ year olds (34.7% of 65+)

Whites

 Other Public (45.1%) and Medicare (34.1%)

 - Medicaid (21.8%)

 - Self-pay with the lowest (18.0%)

Results

Messages = 628	
Message Category	**Count**
Medication Management	181
Symptoms	125
Referral Request	115
Lab Results	113
Treatment Plan	75
Refill Request	45
Imaging	41
Appointment Request	31
Medical Record Request	23

Medication Management: Hello: I was prescribed mirtazapine to replace clonazapam. I've been taking it now for 4-5 days. My feet and ankles are swelling noticeably. WebMD suggested to contact the doctor immediately, if this particular side effect represents. What do I do?

Symptoms: I'm not getting better yet. Still have a terrible cough and now an earache in my left ear. Not sure what to do. Please let me know. Thanks.

Referral Request: I was wondering if you could refer me to and eye dr that takes my insurance.

Lab Results: Hi Do you have my results from my blood draws taken on Friday April 4th, 2014? I thought they would be loaded on this system by now. Thank you for your time.

Discussion

1) Minorities tend not to be registered and use the portal, but this could be because of language barriers.

2) Based on these data, it appears that the uninsured stand to gain the least from this technology as they are registered and use the portal the least.

3) Older patients account for less than half the population but use the patient portal the most. This could be because they have more chronic illnesses which require more attention.

4) Patients use the portal to communicate information about their symptoms and medication and ask for referrals and lab results the most.
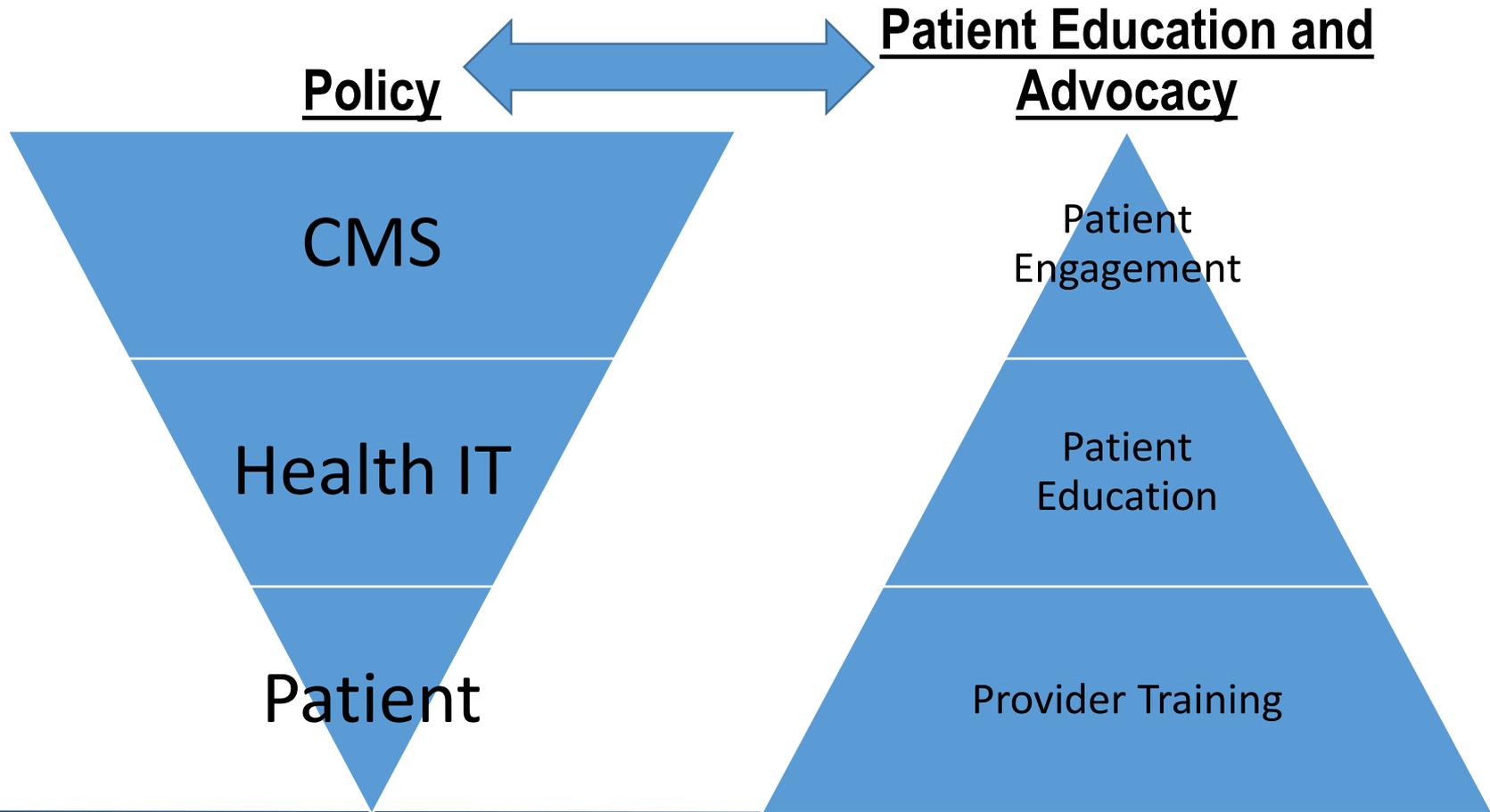
*Limitations of study

 - Did not account for number of visits or language

 - No odds ratio or multivariable logistic regression, no qualitative research software*

Recommendations

1) Reach out to minorities and the uninsured to make sure they can benefit from this technology.

 - Open up the 3 other languages on NextGen

 - Register and enroll them (Bulk Registration)

 - Educate patients on its capabilities.

2) In order to reach Meaningful Use, eligible providers will have to be knowledgeable of, use, and promote the portal.

  - Training for existing providers and new hires and locums.

  - Talk to your patients about it.

3) Patients stand to benefit from medication management via the portal and want to engage in their own health care this way.

  - Encourage them to do so!

Conclusion

Policy ⟷ **Patient Education and Advocacy**

CMS

Health IT

Patient

Patient Engagement

Patient Education

Provider Training

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