Filling in the Gaps in Transportation: A Needs Assessment for the Adelante Healthcare Peoria Site Expansion

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Introduction

• Adelante Healthcare is a non-profit organization comprising seven, and soon to be eight, federally qualified health centers.

• Patient populations must overcome the social determinants of health that leave them more likely to die early from preventable illness and without adequate care.
  • Education, employment, and transportation, etc.

• I will be assessing the transportation needs of that community by surveying three other Adelante Healthcare clinics in the surrounding area.
Background

• Poor transportation inhibits the ability to seek out education options, employment, and healthcare needs.

• In environments without a strong public transportation infrastructure health outcomes will be negatively impacted.

• Close to 1/3 of the United States population is considered transportation disadvantaged.

• The city of Phoenix and its surrounding cities provide public transportation services by contract with private companies. Peoria is not one of them.
Methodology

• 5 question survey (see Appendix A) was designed to be short and rapidly administered to a large number of patients.

• 3 Adelente Healthcare clinics closest to Peoria were surveyed regarding transportation.
  • Sites in Surprise, Phoenix, and Avondale.

• 124 patients

• The surveys were given to patients with the aid of a Spanish translator when necessary.
Sample Patient Survey

Insurance Provider: __________________

PLEASE CIRCLE ONE ANSWER!

How do you normally get to your appointments?

a) public transportation
b) personal car
c) ride from a friend/family
d) walking
e) Other

Do you have reliable transportation for medical visits?

a) yes
b) no

Is transportation often a reason for missing an appointment?

a) yes
b) no

Would you be willing to take a taxi if it was convenient?

a) yes
b) no

How would you rate the performance of the AHCCCS taxi cabs on a scale of 1-10?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 I Don't use

AHCCCS Taxis

Any other comments/concerns???
Results (Overall)

- 69.5% of patients use their personal car, 18.8% get a ride with family or friends, 8.6% take some form of public transportation, 2.3% take taxis.
- Reliable transportation to their medical visit: 10.5% indicated “No.”
- Taxi service if a reliable and convenient one was available: 75% said “Yes.”
- Transportation as the main reason for missing appointments: 10% indicated “Yes.”
Results (Overall)

- Reliability
  - personal vehicle 97% felt that it was reliable, 83% from those getting transportation from friends and family, 66% from those taking taxis, and 50% from those using public transportation.
Results (Surprise)

- 25% of total survey results
- 77% used personal cars, 20% got a ride with family or friends, and only 3% used public transportation
- Reliable transportation 97% said “Yes”
- Transportation was the main reason for missing any appointments 97% said “No”
Discussion

• A majority of patients use personal transportation or the personal transportation of others to attend appointments at the Adelante Healthcare sites.

• Local taxi services are a resource for certain AHCCCS plans but have had mixed reviews overall.

• Although the majority of patients that come in have reliable personal transportation, there is area for improvement for the patients using public transportation.

• In comparing the Surprise site to Avondale and Phoenix it shows that there is a larger percentage of patients that use public transportation to reach their appointments. These results support the idea that there may be a group of patients that rely on public transportation and are currently unable get to Surprise
Limitations

• Inability to survey the no-show patients
• Sample size overall. The assessment reached 124 patients
• Summer months is not ideal. With increased temperature in the summer, sometimes reaching over 115°
Recommendations

• Begin to incorporate new ways to insure that transportation needs are met by patients.

• Suggest adding transportation evaluations into the evaluations currently conducted for the quality assurance already performed.

• Suggest incorporating procedures regarding the accessing of taxi services for patients into the orientation for all medical assistants.

• Create a shuttle service could be created to shuttle patients from the nearest bus stop, four miles away, to the health center.
Conclusion

- Transportation options are a part of the social aspects of health that affect long-term outcomes of patients.
- With well-informed providers patients can be more educated regarding their ability to utilize taxi services.
- Providing resources to advocate for increased bus routes may create more Valley Metro routes in the future.
- Although there were limitations to this study, some insight were observed and future studies will be better equipped to seek out solutions to transportation obstacles.
Acknowledgements

- Adelante Healthcare
  - Audrey Bohanan, Connie Jun, Avein Saaty-Tafoya, MD
  - Phoenix, Avondale, & Surprise sites
- Dr. Jonathan Cartsonis, MD
- Prisca Osuji