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Statewide Survey of Medical Directors to Identify Perceptions About Transitions of Care Between Acute Care Hospitals and Skilled Nursing Facilities

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BACKGROUND

With the growth of the hospitalist subspecialty there has been change in the way patients are cared for after they stabilize from their initial presentations. A major part of this change is that more providers—and more facilities—are involved in this subsequent care. This means more hand offs, and, sometimes, less communication about a patient’s hospital course and subsequent needs. Thus, there is a need to examine this process with an eye for improvement in the quality of care delivered to the patients who engage the system.

METHODS

The state chapter of the American College of Physicians (ACP) convened a task force to address patient safety concerns in the state of New Mexico. Hand offs from acute care hospitals to skilled nursing facilities (SNFs) was identified as an important concern and the need to gather information about this process (especially the ideas of those providers receiving patients in transfer) was identified as a goal. To accomplish this goal, the task force created a 19 question survey and distributed it to 29 medical directors of 50 New Mexico SNFs.

PLANNED NEXT STEPS

1. Pilot use of form.
2. Survey providers completing the form for ease of completion.
3. Survey providers who receive patients for usefulness.
4. Revise the form based on survey results.

RESULTS OF SNF MEDICAL DIRECTORS SURVEY (n=8/29)

- Is the information received from a referring hospital adequate to provide good patient care?
  - Yes: 63%, No: 37%

- Do you typically receive information that is superfluous or not needed?
  - Yes: 0%, No: 25%, No opinion: 75%

- Would a direct contact number of the transferring physician be useful?
  - Yes: 87%, No: 13%

- What is important for you to receive at the time of transfer?
  - Admission diagnosis, medications, current treatments, recent lab results, recent x-rays

TRANSFER FORM

A survey of medical directors of New Mexico’s SNFs provides insight into important aspects of the hand off process from acute care hospitals to SNFs. The information provided by the survey offers a path toward improvement in the quality of this process.

CONCLUSIONS

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