Better Clinical Communications, Better Patient Outcomes

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Patient Satisfaction = Better Outcomes

The Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS), measure patient satisfaction. According to the data gathered by HCAHPS, patient satisfaction is highly correlated with desired outcomes such as:

- **Lower mortality**
- **Decreased readmission**
- **Improved patient outcomes**

Better Communications Lead to Better Outcomes

A key way to improve patient satisfaction is by providing doctors and nurses with the ability to focus on communications with their patients.

Furthermore, poor communications between doctors, nurses and hospital officials is a significant inefficiency which eats up at precious time and decreases the subsequent quality of care.

THE FACTS according to the National Institutes of Health

- Poor communication practices at hospitals result in the breakdowns on healthcare delivery

- Poor communication and collaboration practices were identified as the most common cause of preventable clinical errors

- Communication inefficiencies that result in wasted time for clinicians and increase length of stay for patients could cost North American hospitals as much as $12 billion/year

The Case for Better Clinical Communications

Having better communication between doctors enables them to have more time to provide their patients with quality information. This is further noted in Patient Care Journal which notes that:

> Good provider communication is essential to a patient provider relationship and should have an effect on patient compliance and health outcomes after discharge.

Furthermore, by improving communications, patients can spend less time in the facility and decrease the possibility of being readmitted which can have a definite impact on the patient's wellbeing.

The Need for a Digital Disruption in Clinical Communication

- The goal of improved communications needs to be improving patient outcomes and lowering readmission rates. To this end, secure and encrypted smartphone-based communication platforms are effective tools. Fortunately, most CIOs believe that their hospitals need to bring on a mobile strategy as part of an effort to improve clinical and operational outcomes.

- Patients whose providers used mobile secure text messaging left the hospital about 0.77 days sooner, equivalent to about a 14% reduction in their overall hospital stay. Mobile secure text messaging can improve communication among providers leading to a more efficient care coordination and allowing patient to leave the hospital sooner.

- Shorter stays have better outcomes. According to a study by the VA, a shorter stay in the hospital can actually be more beneficial to you than a longer stay. According to the study, with shorter stays in hospitals patient readmission rates went down by 16%. Death rates went down by 3%.

The Ideal Clinical Communication Platform must have:

A Centralized Platform – Ensure the platform includes a centralized communication hub to manage schedules, groups, reporting or escalations. This will increase the ability of teams to coordinate results, reduce patient wait times, improve patient hand-off and enable faster release.

Digitized Schedule – By enabling the encoding of doctors and nurses shifts into a dynamic electronic schedule, administrators no longer need to question who the on-call doctor is. Critical messages are relayed to the electronic schedule and the person on-call is automatically paged.

Escalation Policies – Escalation ensures that an important message will be forwarded to the next individual on-call if the initial individual who is paged is unavailable.

Communication Redundancy – Ensuring that messages can arrive on recipients' smartphones through persistent messaging in conjunction with redundancies such as phone, email, and SMS will ensure that messages are received in multiple formats. As a consequence, various eventualities will be managed for when physicians and nurses might be accidentally logged out of the system.

Persistent Alerting – Providing alerts that persist until responded to will ensure that physicians and nurses continue to receive a page until they answer. By ensuring persistent messaging, requests won't get forgotten and dropped. Instead, persistent alerting ensures that only when the recipient logs into their secure messaging platform and answers the message will the beeping stop.

Rich Messaging – Enable physicians and nurses to send messages with image and voice attachments in order to improve the quality of communications.

Reporting –By enabling desk staff to see the results of staff scheduling and messaging, the efficacy of correct rotations can be evaluated.

OnPage's Clinical Communication Platform Leads to Better Patient Outcomes

OnPage's Clinical Communication Platform equips healthcare personnel with secure messaging and alert management in one solution thus increasing efficiency and revenue by improving communications.

For example, SAGE NeuroHospitalist is a privately held California-based company that provides rural clinics with neurological services through telemedicine.

SAGE sought an intelligent method with which to route alerts to physicians when one of the hospitals in its network had an immediate need for its teleneurology services.

In the past, when the rural facility would call into SAGE and ask for the attending neurologist, SAGE would page one of their neurologists in the hospital. However, the neurologist didn't always respond immediately. It could take **up to 20 minutes** before a neurologist was alerted.

About OnPage

OnPage's award-winning incident alert management system for IT, MSP and healthcare professionals provides the industry's only ALERT-UNTIL-READ notification capabilities, ensuring that critical messages are never missed. OnPage enables organizations to get the most out of their digital investments, so that sensors, monitoring systems, and people have a reliable way to escalate urgent communications to the right person immediately.

OnPage's escalation, redundancy, and scheduling features make the system infinitely more reliable and secure than emails, text messages and phone calls. OnPage shrinks resolution time by automating the notification process, reducing human errors and prioritizing critical messages to ensure fast response times.

Whether to minimize IT infrastructure downtime, or to reduce the response time of healthcare providers in life-and-death situations, organizations trust OnPage for all their secure, HIPAA-compliant, critical notification needs.

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