Improving Diabetes Care Through the Discharge Process

Presidential Scholars 2009-2010
Medical University of South Carolina


ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND: Diabetes is the seventh leading cause of death in South Carolina. In 2006, three to four people died each day from diabetes, equating to one death every seven hours and thirty three minutes. With statistics that are so striking within our own state, our group has teamed up with Dr. Carolyn Jenkins, principal investigator for a REACH grant to improve care for diabetics. Our goal is to decrease the incidence of hospital readmissions within a 30-day period by re-engineering discharge planning through patient education and follow-up appointments to increase compliance with medications and clinical pathways.

METHODS: We partnered with our community liaison, Dr. Carolyn Jenkins, the chair of the Outreach Council of the state legislated Diabetes Initiative of South Carolina, and principal investigator for a REACH grant to improve care for diabetics. Our goal is to decrease the incidence of hospital readmissions within a 30-day period by re-engineering discharge planning through patient education and follow-up appointments to increase compliance with medications and clinical pathways.

OBJECTIVE: Our research study is set to commence in late 2010. By redesigning the method of discharge education, we expect to reduce not only the cost of life but also the cost of readmissions and emergency department visits related to diabetes, and improving the discharge package for patients and providers. We were given the assignment of presenting an exercise plan and a healthy diet for diabetics to include in the pamphlets (see figure 1).

RESULTS:

- Since our project is still in research and design stages, no statistical results yet exist to quantify diabetic patient readmission rates. We anticipate similar statistical results to that which was obtained by Project RED
  - 30% less hospital readmissions and ED visits
  - Reduced total costs by an average of $412
- 2/3 of the patients were followed-up with a clinical pharmacist and 54% of these cases presented one or more medication related problems, which was identified and resolved with the help of a clinician.

DISCUSSION:

Our research study is set to commence in late 2010. By redesigning the method of discharge education, we expect to reduce not only the cost of life but also the cost of readmissions and outpatient visits.

REFERENCES:

2. Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews. (2009)

Presented at: Presidential Scholars Day, Medical University of South Carolina Charleston, SC April 13, 2010

In an effort to promote healthy development and healthy behaviors at every stage of life, our group identified our at risk population as diabetic patients recently discharged from an inpatient or outpatient facility.

As the seventh leading cause of death in South Carolina, a diagnosis of diabetes not only dramatically changes the lifestyle of an individual patient, but it also accounts for 3 to 4 deaths per day in the state of South Carolina alone. The CDC estimates that the economic burden of diabetes in the United States reaches $174 billion according to 2007 data.

Our research study is set to commence in late 2010. By comparing our intervention with the similar intervention used by Project RED at Boston University, we expect to reduce hospital readmissions of diabetic patients.

By redesigning the method of discharge education, we expect to reduce not only the cost of life but also the cost of healthcare related to the diagnosis of diabetes in our experimental group.