Guiding At-Risk Patients: Navigating the Healthcare System, Community and Life

Megan Phillips, LSW, MSW
Sanford Health

Objectives

• Understand the “why” behind the creation of the Health Guide role
• Understand the role and functions of the Health Guide
• Understand the Health Guide as a Care Team Member
• Evaluation and Outcomes
The Statistics

- Top 5% of Americans made up 50% of US Health Care Spending (Weissmann, 2012)
- 20% of the population uses 80% of health care dollars (Kullgren, 2012)
- 70-80% of health outcomes are attributed to environment and behavior (2013 University of Maryland Report; University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute)

Need 4 Volunteers
You don't have to talk!
It is short!
It is painless!
**Reality**

- Most at risk patients will not come to us
- Most at risk patients have broken trust
- At risk patients don’t have a health insider
- At risk patients suffer from disconnected care
- At risk patients are discouraged by unrealistic recommendations

**What is a Health Guide?**

[Image of Megan Phillips, Health Guide]
Design Principles

• Craft care as an ongoing journey
• Help patients overcome shame
• Use data to inform high-touch care
• Building trusting relationships to improve clinical outcomes
• Provide support anywhere, anytime

Trustworthy Insider

• High-touch, high-frequency support
• Patient-centered support in navigating healthcare system and community resources
• Passion for health, wellness, and patient advocacy
• Liaison between patient, healthcare system, community
Key Roles to Health Guide Model

- Bridge gaps between patient and health system through coordination of care
- Assist in overcoming barriers to complex healthcare needs
- Provide key education
- Provide regular in-person interaction
- Facilitate relationships with health system

A Day-In-The Life of a Health Guide

- Collaborating and coordinating care
- Making outreach to patients
- Joining patient visits
- Sharing of quality time
- Engaging with community resources
The health guide walks alongside the patient to improve communication between members of healthcare team, to empower patient to have a voice in their own care, and to promote a trusting relationship with the patient and the system.

Strategies for effective use of Health Guides

- Gain insight to available Sanford and community resources
- Promote and clarify new role
- Develop relationships to expand on referral sources
- Provide awareness to outcomes
Health Guide as a Care Team Member

- Patient and Family
- Primary Care
- Specialty Care
- Behavioral Health
- Community

Community Partnerships

- Transportation
- Employment
- Housing
- Food
- Financial
- Disability
But honestly…

Each day is a new day…and a daily routine is **NOT** the norm

Graduation: Self-Management

- Appropriate utilization of acute care
- Routine engagement with primary care
- Communication to care team
- Stabilization of chronic conditions
- Actively addressing behavioral and social stressors
Evaluation

• Key Metrics to align with guiding principles
• Understanding a “team effort”
• EMR Data: survey trends, interventions, health care utilization
  – Trust and Wellbeing Questionnaire
  – Goal setting and attainment
  – Social determinants of health connections

Trust Questions

• I trust health care
• I feel heard when speaking with my care team
• I feel that I am a partner in developing my plan of care
Wellbeing Questions

- How would you evaluate your current health and wellbeing
- How would you rate your current energy level
- How would you rate your current mood
- Rate your levels of satisfaction with:

Projected Outcomes

- Decrease acute care utilization
- Increase in primary utilization
- Decreased no show rates
- Increased patient satisfaction
- Increased community partnerships
Overcoming Obstacles

• Identify the “right” patient
• Awareness and clarification of the role
• Building trust takes time
• Appropriate panel size
• Data and metrics

The Wins Lie within the Stories…
Questions?