Streamlined, sustainable, resource friendly improved patient portal enrolment in an academic resident continuity clinic - QI made simple

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Background

- Residents at the University of Kansas Medical Center rotate on a “3+1” curriculum. The residents are split into four cohorts or “firms,” each designated by a different color. During inpatient rotations, there can be a delay in clinic result communication.
- Data has shown that improved patient access to their electronic record improves clinic workflow, patient satisfaction and provider satisfaction.
- Our aim was to significantly increase patient portal enrollment in our resident continuity clinic by implementing a quality improvement intervention that is sustainable, reproducible, and at no added cost.

Innovation

- Prior to project initiation, nurses were informed of project goals at a standard pre-existing meeting. Reminders were placed on computer monitors as a prompt for rooming nurses to discuss patient portal sign up.
- After the typical rooming process, prior to leaving the room, nurses opened a secure sign up portal on the computer, allowing the patient an opportunity to sign up while waiting for the physician.
- The primary end-point was to significantly improve patient enrollment.

Results

• After the four week intervention, data was analyzed using an independent samples t-test to compare pre- and post-portal usage. There was a significant difference pre intervention vs post intervention, t(3.16), p<0.005.

Discussion

• Electronic medical records with patient portals allow physicians prompt, secure, and immediate communication of results with patients.
• Our quick, low-cost, and simple intervention demonstrated a significant increase in our desired outcome.
• Our main study limitation was patient scheduling in resident clinic. As with every clinic, patient cancellations, additions, and reschedules were challenges to our data collection and study patients were not identical in pre/post assessments. Despite this limitation, we were still very successful with our project aim.

Future Directions

• Future direction will be to continue to assess patient portal access and sustainability of the intervention. Ultimately, it is our goal to assess whether improved patient portal access leads to improved nursing workflow for timely result communication in an academic resident continuity clinic practice.
• Future PDSA cycles include measurement of time stamped data for all resident panels, and educating residents on MyChart sign ups.