Effects of Telephone Follow up Call on Patient Satisfaction in the Emergency Department

BACKGROUND

• Patient satisfaction has become a key component of success in a competitive healthcare market.
• The concept is used in health care systems as an indicator of quality care as well as financial reimbursement incentives.
• The Emergency Department is a significant area of health care systems looking for ways to improve and maintain high patient satisfaction as it is often considered to be the front door of the hospital (Gold et al, 2012)
• A telephone follow up call (TFC) provides an opportunity to evaluate the patient’s understanding of education materials, identify prospective areas for practice improvement, enhance the quality of patient care, determine patients’ adherence to discharge instructions, and evaluate patients’ overall perception of hospital performance (Meade, C.M., Studor, n.d.)

PURPOSE

• The purpose of this project is to evaluate the effect of a follow up call (TFC) on patient satisfaction in the ED

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RESULTS

• Patient satisfaction was positively impacted by TFCs in the following ways:
  1) patients were given the opportunity to have any questions or concerns addressed
  2) patients were given the opportunity to discuss their understanding of their discharge instructions

CONCLUSION

• This pilot study showed excellent results in the ED setting correlating TFCs and patient satisfaction, recommending that future research improve generalizability by involving larger sample sizes and variety of health care settings to study the effects and utilization of a telephone follow up call

We would like to thank the participating Health Systems for their cooperation with this project.

METHODS

• A descriptive, exploratory study was conducted at two Midwestern urban EDs within the same city.
• One hundred three patients were asked:
  1) My additional questions or concerns were addressed satisfactorily with the follow up phone call
  2) The follow up phone call improved my overall satisfaction with my ED visit
  3) The follow up phone call improved my understanding of the instructions given to me at the time of my discharge
• Participants were categorized by gender and age groups: 19-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-69, 70-79, 80 and above