Patient Progression: A Multidisciplinary, Data-Driven Approach to Moving Patients Safely, Timely & Efficiently

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ABSTRACT

Duke Regional Hospital (DRH) is an acute care community hospital located in Durham, NC with 369 licensed beds. The hospital is a part of Duke University Health System. High emergency department lengths of stays can negatively impact patient care, patient satisfaction and patients who leave without being seen by a medical provider. In 2016 a hospital strategic priority was set to improve the emergency department length of stay (ED LOS) for admitted patients, improve the time to assign an inpatient bed and decrease patient wait times at transition points.

BACKGROUND

A multi-disciplinary team completed a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats (SWOT) analysis, along with a detailed mapping of the admission, transfer and discharge processes. The team also reviewed existing data, completed a deep dive analysis to understand the reasons why patients wait and created a proposal with recommendations. Existing data showed DRH had a progressive yearly increase in the amount of time to assign an inpatient bed, however the hospital average daily occupancy was only 64% for FY16.

INTERVENTIONS

- Development of Patient Progression dashboard and key performance indicators
- Creation of a General Medicine unit
- Clarification of Step-down and Telemetry admission criteria
- Transition Care Unit pilot
- Admissions & Discharge RN pilot
- ED RN Navigator pilot
- Bed Placement Process pilot
- Development of action plan to minimize time between when patient leaves the facility and when its marked in hospital information system
- Plan with Environmental Services to optimize bed turnover

PROCESS CHANGES

- Development of Patient Progression dashboard and key performance indicators
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LESSONS LEARNED

Improving Patient Progression requires:

- A data-driven approach with continuous data analysis
- Multi-disciplinary stakeholders
- Senior leader, front line staff and patient safety engagement
- Provider involvement
- Financial commitment
- Maximizing utilization of existing technology
- Developing and implementing staffing plans
- Ability to pivot while remaining focused on goals

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