
Pharmacists' Involvement Improves Patient Outcomes



Additional attention from pharmacists towards patients, such as educational talks about prescribed medications, may lead to increased level of patient satisfaction during hospital stays.

This is the conclusion of the study, *Pharmacists Transitions-of-Care Service Improves HCAHPS Scores and Decreases 30-day Hospital Readmission*, conducted at Methodist University Hospital in Memphis and presented at the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP) [54th Midyear Clinical Meeting and Exhibition](#).

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During the research, additional emphasis was put on education patients about their medication before discharge, and the study looked into the effects of this strategy. Pharmacists explained prescribed medication to patients and after discharge followed up with a phone call to discuss their care.

According to lead author, Katherine L. March, Pharm.D., BCPS, Clinical Pharmacy Specialist at Methodist University Hospital in Memphis, it is already known that inadequately planned and communicated transitions of care may cause adverse drug events and increase readmission rates. The study's aim was to both improve patient satisfaction and reduce readmission rates: "[W]e focused Methodist pharmacy staff on medicine reconciliation and disease education. Ultimately, we found that pharmacy-based transition-of-care models can improve patient satisfaction. We saw a drop in readmission rates as well," said March.

In total, the study's sample included 1,728 patients. Of those, in 414 cases the full transition-of-care education protocol was implemented, and this led to a substantial increase of 14.7% in the overall average mean score (assessed by the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems ([HCAHPS](#)) survey). In addition, a post-discharge phone call resulted in a 29 percentage points drop in hospital 30-day readmission rates (from 17.3% to 12.4%).

"Our findings add to growing literature demonstrating that pharmacist involvement in hospital discharge improves outcomes and safety," added March highlighting the importance of pharmacists' roles in a patient's hospital stay, including comprehensive medication management and ensuring medication safety.

References

March KL et al. (2019) *Pharmacists Transitions-of-Care Service Improves HCAHPS Scores and Decreases 30-day Hospital Readmission Rates*. Presented at the ASHP 54th Midyear Clinical Meeting and Exhibition on 11 December 2019.

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