

Patient Safety – Reducing Length of Stay

Norwood Hospital Improves Safety with Geographical Rounding

Background

Norwood Hospital is a full-service, 263-bed community hospital in Norwood, Massachusetts. In 2013, TeamHealth Hospital Medicine began providing the facility's hospital medicine staffing, clinical leadership and performance management services with a goal of decreasing length of stay and improving patient safety and satisfaction.

Quality Initiative

To improve the care and safety of patients during their hospital stay and through their discharge home, TeamHealth instituted "geographical rounding." Under the model, a hospitalist is assigned to each inpatient floor, instead of working throughout the facility. Each day at 10 a.m., the hospitalist on duty assembles the floor's clinical team – including the charge nurse, case manager, physical therapist, pharmacist and social worker – to discuss the day's patients, coordinate medical care and determine how to address any nonclinical factors that may affect a patient's ability to safely transition home, such as their support structure at home.

Results

By creating a more structured model for coordinating inpatient care, the hospitalist team reduced the average inpatient length of stay by nearly a day, from 3.5 days to about 2.8 days, thereby lowering patients' chances of contracting a hospital-acquired infection or other complication. In addition, working with a defined team in one geographical area has resulted in greater camaraderie, teamwork and engagement among physicians, nurses and staff. And the changes have contributed to the hospital's overall increase in patient satisfaction. In recognition of these accomplishments, Norwood Hospital's Quality and Patient Safety Department awarded the hospital medicine team with its Certificate of Achievement.

Contact

Adrian Pieleanu, M.D.

Chief of Hospitalist Division for Norwood Hospital