Introducing Patient Panel Reports to Internal Medicine Residents
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Problem: The Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education requires that internal medicine residents demonstrate competency in the domain of Practice-Based Learning and Improvement. Linking education and patient care quality and measuring patient care outcomes is challenging.

Evidence: Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care system quality of care indicators for prevention and chronic disease states are available and have been shown to be effective in improving patient care.

Strategy: We introduced patient panel reports with specific diabetes mellitus quality indicators to our internal medicine housestaff in January 2011.

Practice Change: We asked our residents to choose a parameter and develop an action plan for improvement.

Evaluation: Eight of 25 interns completed this mandatory assignment. Two of the responses specified the goal of improving overall blood pressure control by entering properly a repeat BP measurement in the appropriate section of the electronic chart. Two interns committed to improving their nephropathy screening rates and an additional 2 interns committed to improving their proportion of DM patients with LDL-cholesterol < 100. Two interns submitted an action plan to improve overall DM control in their patient panel. One intern outlined an action plan to use non-physician providers for assistance with patient education and insulin titration. The other action plan was less specific and consisted of “continuing to educate patients and make sure they adhere to medications and diet.”

Results: The residents’ action plans reflected a change at the level of the provider. Some of the plans were not specific.

Recommendations: The action plans reflect some potential improvements in documentation and processes of care. It may be helpful to involve other members of the team, including nursing, in the next phase of this project.

Lessons Learned: The assignment was mandatory, yet, the response rate was still low. Future iterations of this assignment will include scheduled time for housestaff to review their patient panel reports with direct faculty guidance.

Bibliography: