

Project Title: Improving Medication Management Practices and Care Transitions through Technology

Principal Investigator: Feldman, Penny, Ph.D.

Organization: Visiting Nurse Service of New York (VNSNY)

Mechanism: RFA: HS08-002: Ambulatory Safety and Quality Program: Improving Management of Individuals with Complex Healthcare Needs through Health IT (MCP)

Grant Number: R18 HS 017837

Project Period: 09/08 – 09/11

AHRQ Funding Amount: \$1,199,998

Summary Status as of: December 2008

Strategic Goal: Develop and disseminate health IT evidence and evidence-based tools to support patient-centered care, the coordination of care across transitions in care settings, and the use of electronic exchange of health information to improve quality of care.

Business Goal: Implementation and Use

Summary: Dr. Feldman and her team launched their project in late September 2008. The goal of this randomized, controlled study is to design and test a medication management strategy that harnesses the power of information technology (IT) to facilitate high quality care transitions through improved clinician practice and enhanced patient engagement. The two interventions to be tested include: 1) a “basic” intervention that uses an algorithm to alert the home health nurse, at the point of service, to a patient at risk of a potentially serious medication problem and provides the clinician with decision support, including high risk medication management recommendations that are integrated into the clinician’s visit documentation system and the electronic patient health record; and (2) an “augmented” intervention that includes all the IT elements of the basic intervention targeted to the home health nurse plus materials designed for and directly delivered to patients at home via Internet or mail. These interventions will be compared to each other and to a usual care group. The electronic health record (EHR) is a self-developed system that incorporates the First DataBank drug records. This project is an extension of their existing health IT system and uses many of the features that the home health nurses regularly use.

Specific Aims

- Examine the relative effects of the basic and augmented interventions on workflow and medication management practices of home health care nurses. **(Ongoing)**
- Examine the relative effects of the basic and augmented interventions on the outcomes and service use of patients in the respective intervention groups. **(Ongoing)**
- Estimate the costs associated with each of the interventions and subsequent care, and compare these costs across interventions and relative to usual care. **(Upcoming)**

2008 Activities: Dr. Feldman recruited or retained the project management and analytic staffing for this project. The team is in the process of finalizing the content for the computerized medication risk algorithm. They are holding meetings with the Visiting Nurse Service of New York (VNSNY) Information Systems (IS) and Systems Application Implementation (SAI) groups in order to secure allocations of IS and SAI programming time in 2009. They secured Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval at the primary VNSNY site and the co-investigator site at the Medical College of Wisconsin. In order to obtain agency intake and assessment data for their sample population, they submitted a Waiver of

Authorization and received approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB)/Health Insurance Privacy and Accountability Act (HIPAA) privacy board.

Preliminary Impact and Findings: There are no findings at this time because they are still developing the intervention.

Selected Outputs

None Available.

Grantee's Most Recent Self-Reported Quarterly Status: The project is mostly on track, but the project team is concerned that, because of the general fiscal environment, the IT departments may have to reduce staff, which may delay some implementation steps. The project team is working on alternative strategies in the event of staffing reductions.

Milestones: Progress is mostly on track.

Budget: Spending is roughly on target.