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MAUN-LEMKE
Changing the Results of Healthcare

SOLUTIONS

The Newsletter for Healthcare & Human Services

December 1, 2017



Our team wishes you a joyous holiday season sparkled with moments of love, laughter, and goodwill, and may the year ahead be full of contentment and joy!



The Best Ways to Build Better Referral Relationships

With healthcare reform and reimbursements in an ever-changing state, the need to build strong and professional referral relationships with home healthcare and other providers has perhaps never been so important. Indeed, many organizations like yours are often asking the question, "How do we design offerings to best fit patients' needs that also boost hospital and home health referrals?"

Although it may certainly take time, your organization can build and/or enhance referral relationships with a few key strategies. Take note of the tips below:

1. **Evaluate your offerings and build an action plan from there.** When it comes to referral relationships, your organization needs to be the answer to a provider's problems and be the best and most obvious choice when they are selecting a partner. But, you won't be able to increase referrals if you don't have a firm grasp on your current offerings and what you need to build and enhance. Evaluate your offerings and the issues and gaps you face. How do your current offerings address a potential partner's problems? What would you need to build and offer to grow partnerships? Starting with an assessment of your abilities to manage increasingly medically complex patients will help you create your action plan.
2. **Go beyond basic offerings.** If you're seeking better referral relationships with hospitals and other healthcare providers, your facility probably needs to go beyond basic care and activities of daily living. Based on your assessment of offerings, you may have many opportunities here.

Here are just a few types of services and training you can add to increase referrals:

- **24/7 nurse practitioners or physicians assistants.** Having this type of staff on hand can help ensure you're better equipped to deal with a crisis, rather than calling 911 and sending a patient to the hospital.
- **More short-term skilled beds.** This can help illustrate your organization's overall commitment to the transitional care model, and thus secure the buy-in and commitment of surrounding hospitals.
- **Healthcare services that go beyond the top chronic illnesses.** Offering specialty services that span a variety of conditions and issues like controlling infections, preventing pressure ulcers, palliative care, wound care, insulin therapy, and pain management demonstrates that your facility can provide quality care for patients with complex medical conditions. This is a key factor when hospitals and providers are seeking partners.
- **Software or services that assist with decision-making.** Leveraging

and implementing technology that evaluates and tracks patient trends can set your facility apart from the rest. It's an added measure that demonstrates you're tightly focused on making the right decisions to produce the best possible outcomes.

3. **Involve and engage.** Hospitals and other providers must know that you understand their challenges and can help them become more efficient and achieve their own goals. You can involve and engage potential partners by:
 - **Sponsoring quality meetings with discharge planners.** Discharge planners influence transfer decisions, so be sure to clearly outline and communicate your specialized care offerings. Make sure you have a clear understanding of the financial penalties hospitals face when they have high readmissions, and then show how your specialized services can help them cut risks.
 - **Invite hospital staff to help develop protocols and policies.** Long-term care and skilled nursing facilities have different protocols and standards from those of a hospital. Invite hospital staff to help you create more consistent and standard policies and protocols. This can help improve continuity of care, and it shows you're committed to a long-term partnership.
 - **Invite physicians to become part of the program.** When physicians regularly visit and become part of your care community, they can observe what's happening firsthand. They can provide feedback and suggestions to your facility. Further, physicians with this type of involvement can go back to the hospital and talk about your facility with other physicians. Those physicians may often recommend your facility to patients, based on their positive experiences and observations.
4. **Have numbers ready to show value.** If you want to be the provider of choice, you better know your numbers as it relates to patient outcomes and re-hospitalizations. Numbers are important and you won't increase partnerships and referrals with providers without some persuasive metrics.

To be sure, hospitals and staff must have confidence that when they send patients your way, it will yield positive outcomes. Make sure you're measuring results and sharing data with physicians and other providers to explain how a referral program will benefit their patients and practice.

"Don't count the days, make the days count."

—Muhammad Ali



Communication Corner

Who Needs Long-Term Care? A Look at the Data & Stats

Long-term care is different from traditional healthcare in that the goal of long-term care isn't always to cure or prevent an illness. Rather, it's to allow an individual to attain and maintain the best level of health possible. The primary long-term care population consists of those who have lost some capacity for self-care because of a chronic illness or disabling condition. Here are some key facts and stats as they relate to long-term care services and who needs them. Keep in mind that long-term care needs and services are wide-ranging and complex, and statistics and numbers often vary from study to study.

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, **more than 8 million people receive support from the five main long-term care service providers every year:** home health agencies (4 million), nursing homes (1.3 million), hospices (1.2 million), residential care communities (713,000) and adult day service centers (273,000).

An estimated 12 million Americans need long-term care every year according to the most recent data published by the Center for American Progress.

Most but not all persons in need of long-term care are elderly according to a report published by AARP. Approximately 63% are persons aged 65 and older (6.3 million); the remaining 37% are 64 years of age and younger (3.7 million).

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, by 2050, the number of individuals using paid long-term care services in any setting (at home, residential care such as assisted living, or skilled nursing facilities) **will likely double from the 13 million using services in 2000, to 27 million people.**

Almost 15% of the 65+ population were reported to be below the poverty level according to the most recent data published by the Administration on Aging.

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the prevalence of cognitive impairment among the older population increased over the past decade, while the prevalence of physical impairment remains unchanged.

Individuals 85 years and older are one of the fastest growing segments of the population according to the U.S. Census Bureau. In 2012, there were an estimated 5.9 million people 85+ in the United States. This figure **is expected to increase to 19.4 million by 2050.**

*"Success is going from failure to failure without losing your enthusiasm."
—Winston Churchill*



News You Can Use

New Study Aims to Answer if Person-Centered Care Can Improve Residents' Satisfaction With Nursing Home Quality

For the past several years, person-centered care (PCC) has been promoted as greatly beneficial to residents as well as the nursing homes that implement it. Furthermore, a

recent study supports this statement. The study, published in *The Journal of Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine*, studied 320 Kansas nursing homes and compared resident satisfaction in those participating in a program to promote PCC with those that do not. Nearly 12,000 nursing home residents completed face-to-face interviews between 2013 and 2015.

The study found that facilities that applied PCC practices reported greater resident satisfaction. Those findings are consistent with other studies that have found higher quality of life and quality of care in nursing homes that have embraced person centered care. The study's authors noted that the residents in homes that had fully implemented PCC also reported being satisfied with the choices available to them, the respect shown to them, their privacy needs being met, and staff knowing their preferences.

Researchers determined the scores using the Resident Satisfaction Survey for Kansas, which focuses on quality of life, quality of care, quality of service and global satisfaction. Overall satisfaction scores were higher among residents in the PCC facilities. The researchers emphasized the importance of training and equipping staff with the skills and tools to meet residents' needs. [You can read the full study for more information.](#)

"Tough times never last, but tough people do."

—Dr. Robert Schuller



Just For Fun

You Know You're Drinking Too Much Coffee When...

- You answer the door before people knock
- You ski uphill
- You speed walk in your sleep
- You haven't blinked since the last lunar eclipse
- You just completed another sweater and you don't know how to knit
- You grind your coffee beans in your mouth
- You have to watch videos in fast-forward
- You lick your coffeepot clean
- You're the employee of the month at the local coffeehouse and you don't even work there
- Your eyes stay open when you sneeze
- You chew on other people's fingernails
- You're so jittery that people use your hands to blend their margaritas
- You can type sixty words per minute... with your feet
- You can jump-start your car without cables
- You don't sweat, you percolate
- You buy half and half by the barrel
- You've worn out the handle on your favorite mug
- You forget to unwrap candy bars before eating them
- You've built a miniature city out of little plastic stirrers

- Starbucks owns the mortgage on your house
- You go to sleep just so you can wake up and smell the coffee



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