Facilitating patient-physician communication and patient engagement for enhanced patient-centered care

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Hypothesis

Librarian consultation and high quality consumer health information will enable patients to take an active role in conversations with healthcare providers and improve patient-provider communication.
The Basics: Librarian Embedded in Outpatient Internal Medicine Clinic

• In the clinic, librarians will assist patients in identifying and clarifying questions to ask the physician before their visit.

• Physicians can write an “Information Prescription”, directing patients to reputable consumer health information or to consult with the librarians after their visit.
Background

- UF Health Internal Medicine at the Medical Plaza Clinic
- Scheduled appointments and walk-in, urgent-care sessions
- Mix of patients including those from rural Alachua County and surrounding areas

Previous versions of the project:
- Initial pilot May – July 2012
- Continuation October 2012 – February 2013
Methods

• A librarian attended the University of Florida’s Internal Medicine – Medical Plaza (IMMP) Clinic for 4 hours a week from October 2013 – March 2014.

• A laptop with WIFI connections and mobile printer were set up in the waiting room for the librarian to provide individual patient consultations.
Study Populations

**Population 1: Physicians - 27**
- 19 Residents and 8 Attendings
  - Pre-intervention survey
  - Post-intervention survey

**Population 2: Patients - 22 fully enrolled**
- Survey on computer access and preferred learning styles
- Question card
Do you have questions about...
Your diagnosis?
Your medicines?
Your medical tests?

Ask our librarian to help you find information for free today while you wait in our clinic.

IMMS Clinic Medical Plaza
Thursday, 1-5pm

Reference Librarians
Linda Butson & Hannah Norton
patientquestions@health.ufl.edu
(352) 273-8408
My question today is...

Did your time with the librarian preparing question(s) help during your visit with the doctor? YES / NO

Comments -

PLEASE RETURN CARD TO US WHEN YOU LEAVE - THANK YOU!
MedlinePlus.gov
THE WEB SITE YOUR DOCTOR PRESCRIBES

Information Rx

A free, comprehensive, authoritative, up-to-date health information Web site from the world’s largest medical library, the National Library of Medicine of the National Institutes of Health.

UF Health Science Center Libraries
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA
patientquestions@health.ufl.edu
(352) 273-8408
Results – Physician Pre-Survey

On average, my patients are knowledgeable of their condition when they come to see me.

Number of Responses

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n = 27
Results – Physician Pre-Survey

On average, my patients ask me questions about their...

- **Usually**: 3 responses
- **Often**: 10 responses
- **Sometimes**: 9 responses
- **Rarely**: 1 response
- **Never**: 0 responses

- Medications, directions for taking their medication, or side effects: 12 responses
- Condition: 12 responses

Total respondents: **n = 27**
Results - Patients

Which of the following do you use?

- Computer (laptop or desktop): 19
- Smart Phone: 8
- iPad/Tablet computer/E-reader: 6
- Internet access: 17
- None of the above: 3

n = 20
If you use the internet to find health information, what website(s) do you use?

- **WebMD**: 7 responses
- **Google**: 5 responses
- **Wikipedia**: 3 responses
- **myChart**: 3 responses
- **Other**: 8 responses

n = 20
Examples of questions asked by patients

- How can I manage my neuropathy?
- What should I eat to lower my cholesterol?
- Where can I get prescription assistance?
- How do I deal with a new doctor who’s being hard on me?
- Are there treatments for diabetic nerve damage besides medication?
Information Sources Used

- MedlinePlus
- Mayo Clinic
- needymeds.org
- Natural Standard
- Infectious Disease Society of America
Challenges

• Short time available to interact with patients before they are called back
• Focus on the work as a service VS. a research project
• Lack of privacy in the waiting room
• Changes in personnel
Lessons Learned

• Choose the right partners.
• Active outreach is essential.
• Patients, providers and IRB reviewers are unsure of librarians’ roles and abilities, and the resources librarians can provide.
• Patient recruitment takes energy and is an art.
• Multiple sources and formats of health information are needed to meet different learning styles.
Acknowledgements

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