Implementation of a Team Discharge Approach to Improve ECC Throughput

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BACKGROUND
- Emergency Department (ED) throughput is a hospital-wide issue
- ED visits increase annually; ED throughput process improvement was required to meet patient care needs
- Small reductions in patients length of stay (LOS) add up to hours or days of ED bed availability
- Successful ED quality improvement projects have senior leadership support, multidisciplinary teams, and a champion

METHODS
- Design: Evidence-based quality improvement
  - 3432 Emergency Department patient Team Discharges; 8.5% of all discharges
- Procedure
  - Standard of work for Team Discharge developed, input from all stakeholders
  - Education of RN and physicians
  - Identification of patient by nurse appropriate for Team Discharge
  - Audit of de-identified patient data for meeting benchmarks
  - Regular posting of metrics to stakeholders

RESULTS
- Median LOS of Team Discharged ECC patients: 197 minutes (decrease of 51 minutes in LOS)
- Median discharge order placed to patient departure of Team Discharge patients: 19 minutes (decrease in 9 minutes in metric)
- “Overall ED care” patient satisfaction: 68.3% “very good” responses (increase in 12.1%; benchmark: 61%)
- Improvement was made in all metrics tracked during the 9-month implementation of Team Discharge

LOCAL CONTEXT
- LOS of discharged ECC patients: 248 minutes
- Discharge order placed to patient departure: 28 minutes (benchmark: 15 minutes)
- “Overall ED care” patient satisfaction: 56.2% “very good” responses (benchmark: 61%)
- The Emergency Care Center (ECC) team discharge project directly impacts initiative to improve throughput, decrease LOS, and improve patient satisfaction

PURPOSE
- Implementing a team approach to patient discharge addresses delays and promotes collaboration to decrease LOS and improve patient satisfaction

REFERENCES
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DISCUSSION
- The top reasons for delay to discharge resulted in: discharge paperwork not ready, RX not ready, patient questions for provider
- Improved collaboration amongst RN and provider
- Significant increase in overall ED patient satisfaction with a Team Discharge.
- Decreased LOS for patients discharged from ECC

CONCLUSIONS
The use of a collaborative discharge approach improves multiple quality metrics. Further research could explore a collaborative triage intake approach to assess further improvement in quality metrics.