

## Abstract

**Background:** Patients without a primary care provider (PCP) often seek care unnecessarily in the emergency department (ED) when they could have been treated effectively by a PCP, which has negative consequences for both the organization and the patients involved. This quality improvement (QI) project plans to help link patients to primary care during the ED discharge process by scheduling rapid follow-up appointments with the in-house primary care clinics.

**Methods:** In this QI project, existing adult patients of the in-house primary care clinic were offered a rapid follow-up appointment with their provider during discharge from the adult ED during the three-week intervention period. Using the electronic health record (EHR), the following outcome measures were assessed: the number of patients eligible for a rapid follow-up appointment, the number of patients who received a rapid follow-up appointment, the number of patients who attended their scheduled rapid follow-up appointment, the number of patients given a rapid follow-up appointment who returned to the ED within seven days of initial discharge, and the number of patients not given a rapid follow-up appointment who returned to the ED within seven days of initial discharge.

**Results:** During the intervention period, there were 2,875 unique patient visits to the ED. XX% of the XX eligible patients had an appointment scheduled for them during the ED discharge process. Nearly XX% of patients attended their appointment. There were significantly fewer return visits to the ED by patients who received a follow-up appointment compared to those who did not.

**Conclusions:** Though a large percentage of eligible patients were not offered an appointment, those who did receive one were highly likely to attend. Anecdotally, nurses reported increased patient satisfaction with the new process.