

Push or Pull? A chart audit and process map showing how Family Physicians are notified of patients' Emergency Department Visits

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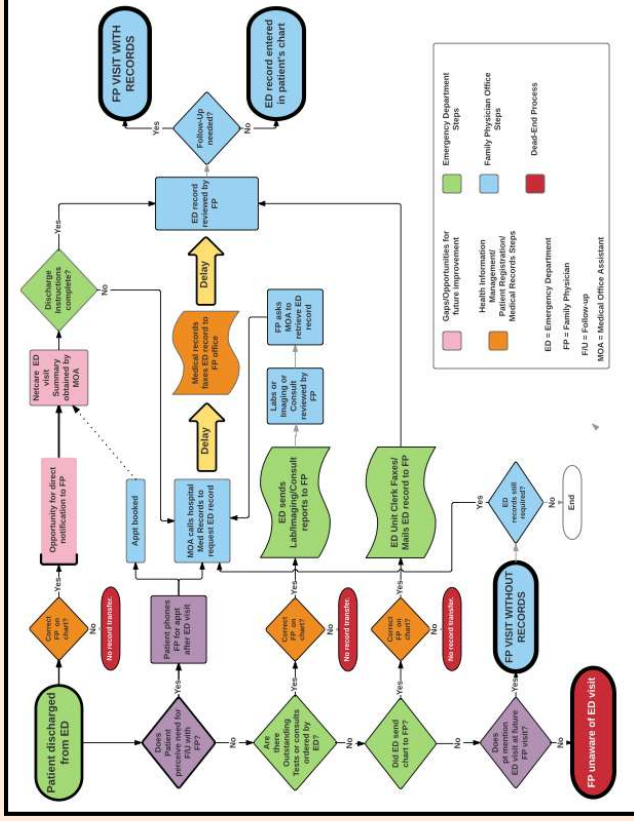
Background

- Patient follow-up can be lacking after patient discharge from Emergency Department (ED) or Urgent Care Centres (UCC) often because of communication gaps or lack of processes to convey information.
- When Family Physicians (FP) have consistent notification of patients' ED/UCC visits and timely access to these medical records, there is greater opportunity for high quality and safe care.
- Currently in Calgary, there is no reliable process in place to notify FPs of their patients' ED/UCC visits, nor to send the clinical record to the FP
- As a starting point, this project aims to evaluate the current ways in which a FP's office obtains patient ED/UCC records and map out the current processes involved with ED/UCC record transfer.

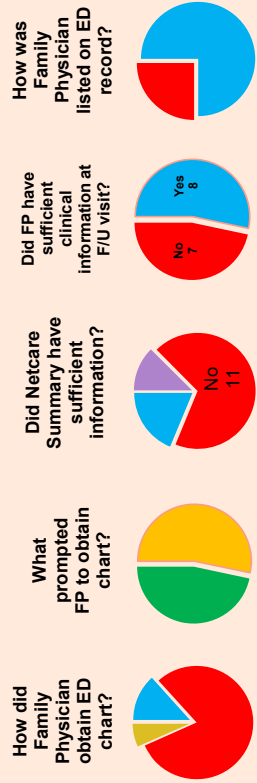
Methods

- The author's EMR was searched for patients who had an ED/UCC Visit over a 3 month period.
- Netcare was searched for the "Netcare ED Visit Summary Report"
- Records were analyzed for:
 1. How ED/UCC record was obtained
 2. What prompted FP to obtain the record
 3. Did the Netcare Report have sufficient clinical information for patient care F/U?
 4. Did the FP have sufficient clinical documentation from the ED Visit at the time of follow-up visit?
 5. Who was listed as the patient's FP?
- Interviews were conducted with clinic staff (MOA, receptionist, physicians) to capture the typical clinic processes that occur with obtaining ER Records
- Interviews were held with key stakeholders including Health Information Management (HIM)-Patient Registration and Emergency Department clinician leader.

Results: Process Map



Results : Chart Audit



Discussion

- FP notification of patients' ED/UCC visits occurs by multiple haphazard pathways, with varying reliability
- The Family Physician is dependent upon patients to self-report their ED/UCC visits.
- If a patient self-reports, then the chart is always able to be retrieved.
- Advance notice is useful to be able to obtain the ED/UCC record in time for the patient's follow-up visit.
- Netcare is an easily accessible resource for patient ED/UCC Visit Summaries, however clinical information useful for follow-up visits is not routinely completed.
- Accurate identification of the patient's Family Physician at the ED/UCC Registration desk is a critical step for ensuring record transfer, and highlights the important role of non-clinical staff.

Room for Improvement

- HIM: Engage front-line registration clerks to capture accurate Family Physician identification on every patient
- HIM: Consider informing patients that they are required to inform their FP of their ED/UCC Visit, until there is a process for FP notification in place.
- Family Physician Offices: Help patients to be able to identify their Family Physician by name (business card, contact on smartphone, plastic sheath for health card with FP's name ^{potential initiative})
- ED: Completion of 'Discharge Instructions' on the Netcare ED visit summary
- IT: Establish a direct notification to FPs of their patients' ED/UCC Visits using autofaxing or email

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