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The Importance of the Electronic Medical Record (EMR) for Preventive Care: Utilizing the "Patient Advisories" Section in Cerner as an Aid to Record and Order Age Appropriate Preventive Screenings

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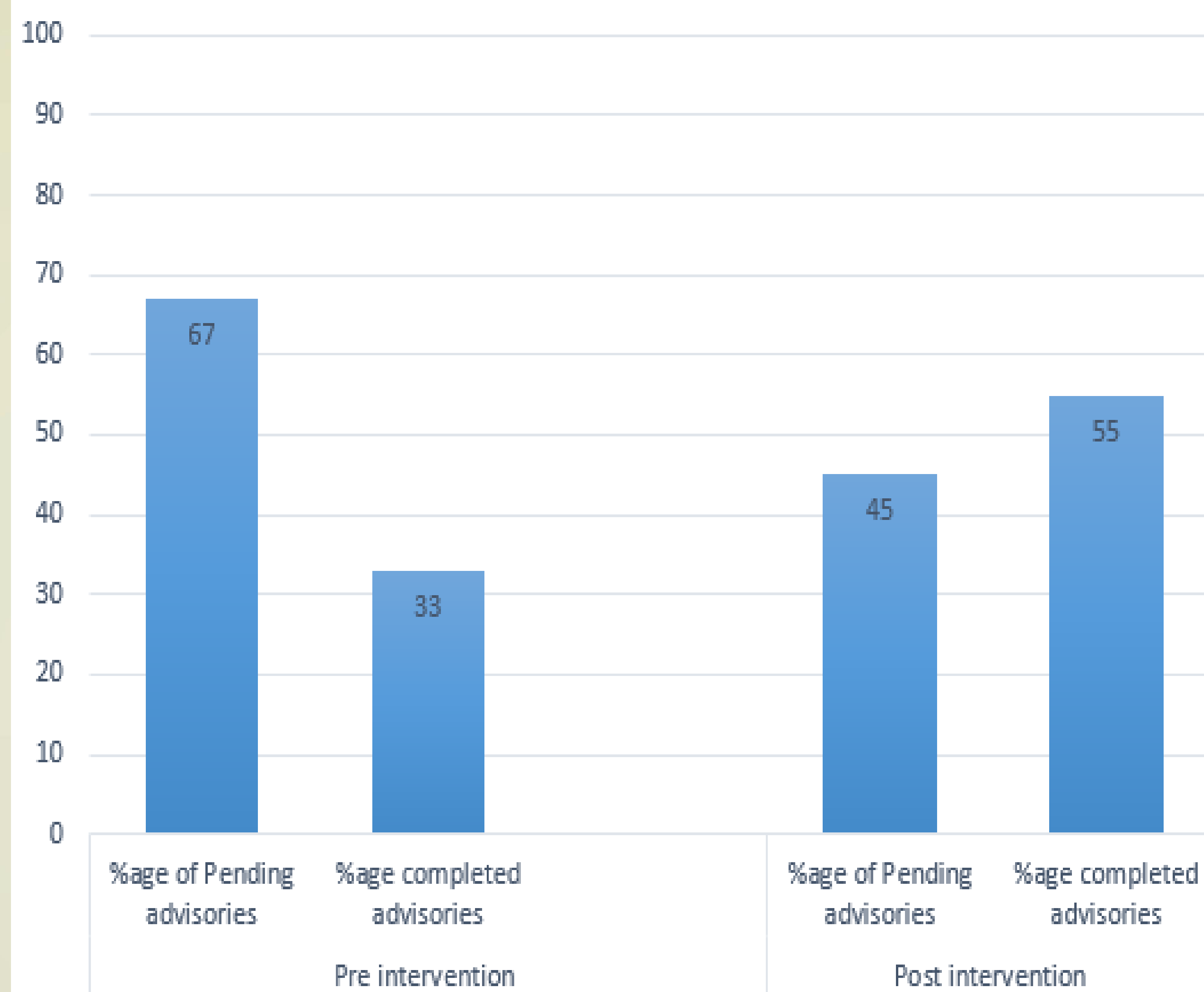
INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this QI project is to improve the habits of primary care physicians of reviewing and updating the “patient advisory” section at each patient visit. “Patient advisories” is a section in EMR that provides a complete list of preventive and screening tasks for each respective patient. This will standardize the process in order to ensure that patients are receiving all their preventive needs in a timely fashion.

METHODS

The subjects are the residents at the Family Medicine Center. To collect the baseline data, we made a random selection of 10 patients from each provider’s schedule in the previous 3 months. The intervention was a lecture to the FMC residents to familiarize them with the “patient advisories”. Their record keeping is measured on a biweekly basis with a group email update on progress.

Percentage of pending and completed patient advisories before and after intervention



FINDINGS

In total, at baseline only 33% of patients advisories were charted as complete/satisfied and 67% remained pending. After intervention to the residents was delivered in the form of training how to complete patient advisories, 55% were reported as charted and 45% still remained pending after biweekly data collection.

DISCUSSION

This quality improvement project serves as a benchmark to compare continued PDSA cycles. This study places significant weight on screenings rendered in primary care offices to offset the burdens of disease management. It also brings special attention to the importance of using the patient advisories section in the EMR and how this process can be used to decrease patients’ morbidity and mortality from chronic preventable diseases.

IMPLICATION TO PRACTICE

Looking forward, it would be interesting to see if more nuance ways of record keeping can show the specific barriers to getting these preventive services. Limitations of this study include a small sample size and limitation to a single study site.