Improving ED Throughput: Role of Dashboard RN

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**Background**

- Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) National Quality Measure (NQM) OP-18b, Median Emergency Department (ED) Length of Stay (LOS) Outpatients, is a measure of ED-throughput efficiency affecting reimbursement for care provided.
- Excessive LOS in EDs contributes to ED overcrowding, patients leaving without being seen and decreased patient satisfaction.
- In one acute care hospital ED, OP-18b was well above the benchmark (142 median minutes) from June to September of 2020, with an average median LOS outpatients 196 minutes.

**Project Goal**

The goal of the project was to decrease the ED CMS NQM OP-18b, Median ED Length of Stay (LOS) Outpatients, through management of an electronic ED Dashboard by dedicated clinical RN.

ED Dashboard (R) displays specific color-coded time stamps depending on test. For example, for lab tests:
- **Blue** <15 minutes from order to collection
- **Orange** 15 to 29 minutes from order to collection
- **Red** ≥30 minutes from order to collection

**Methods of Implementation**

- October 2020, ED implemented an innovative role of a “Dashboard RN” (DRN) to manage electronic patient dashboard.

**Outcomes**

- 4 months prior to implementation of DRN, median ED LOS outpatients (in minutes) were: 205, 202, 182, 193 (average median 196 minutes).
- 4 months following intervention, median ED LOS outpatients (in minutes) were: 160, 172, 163, 133 (average median 157 minutes).
- This represents a 20% decrease in average median LOS from pre-intervention to post-intervention timeframe.

**Discussion**

A Magnet culture of nursing excellence supports innovative role of a clinical RN to manage the ED electronic patient dashboard, resulting in expedited care and facilitated throughput. Clinical RNs are especially well-positioned in this unique role to impact efficiency of quality care.

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