

Kennedy Health + TigerConnect

Kennedy Health's use of an integrated, mobile, and unified clinical communication platform has helped it drastically reduce Emergency Department (ED) overutilization, readmissions, and wasted care.



73% reduction in
ED utilization among
targeted population



22.2% decrease in
Congestive Heart Failure
(CHF) readmissions



8.8% decrease in
COPD readmission
rates



2 full-time employees
reallocated to other
assignments



Reduction of
unnecessary tests and
medications

"When we started using this tool — and *really* tracking these patients — we were able to see that with these real-time interventions beginning in the waiting room, we were able to decrease the number of times these patients were presenting to the emergency room by at least 70 percent."

--Maryann Lauletta, M.D., vice president of medical operations, Kennedy Health

Challenge

Kennedy Health is a three-hospital, 607-bed integrated healthcare delivery system providing a full continuum of healthcare services in southwest New Jersey. In 2013, Kennedy Health discovered that in one six-month period, just 21 patients accounted for 903 visits to its emergency departments. With this discovery, the organization began an initiative to reduce the number of repeat emergency department (ED) visits and readmissions among this population of patients, as well as enterprise wide.

Solution

Kennedy Health's population of ED "super-utilizers" typically presented with pain-related complaints. Concerned that the patients were exhibiting drug-seeking behaviors, Kennedy Health developed a diversion protocol within the ED to prevent an unnecessary readmission and deliver the type of care these patients truly need. For this protocol to be effective, interdepartmental and multi-location communication was crucial. Fortunately, in 2014, the organization had implemented TigerConnect, which allowed clinicians to securely text and share clinical data with care teams at all three of Kennedy Health's hospital campuses.

Through a joint collaboration with TigerConnect, Kennedy Health was able to integrate their electronic health record (EHR) system so that automated alerts would be triggered when a patient in this population, or one with a history of frequent ED visits, checks into any Kennedy ED enterprise wide. Multi-campus integration was essential since these patients tended to seek care at multiple locations. Once alerted, a nurse navigator stationed in the ED intervenes with that patient. From his or her smartphone, the nurse navigator engages behavioral health specialists or substance-abuse rehabilitation facilities to begin pursuing other treatment courses.

Results

Mobilizing care teams using TigerConnect has significantly reduced readmissions as a whole, but particularly among the ED super-utilizer population. The number of visits among these patients decreased 73 percent, while also reducing the utilization of CT scans and certain medications, all of which reduce costs and provide more effective care. Simultaneously, improved clinical communication among care teams combined with better care coordination helped Kennedy Health decrease congestive heart failure readmission rates by 22.2 percent and chronic pulmonary obstructive disease readmission rates by 8.8 percent.

Finally, Kennedy Health was able to reallocate two of their 10 case managers to other campuses to conduct face-to-face interventions with patients.

About TigerConnect

As healthcare's largest provider of clinical communication solutions, TigerConnect helps physicians, nurses, and other staff communicate and collaborate more effectively, accelerating productivity, reducing costs, and improving patient outcomes. Trusted by more than 4,000 healthcare organizations, TigerConnect maintains 99.99% uptime and processes over 10 million messages each day. Its category-leading product innovations and advanced integrations with critical hospital systems deliver high value for hospitals and large health systems by streamlining communication workflows to achieve the highest possible ROI.

Website

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