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To: Physicians

OpenNotes and PCR Benefits

In terms of physician-patient interaction, the nation has been pushing for the implementation of personal health records (PHRs), in which patients are able to access records online from outside the office setting. With this technology, patients are able to attain an accurate review of the healthcare they received and become an active participant in their provided healthcare. While the concept of a PHR is in its early stages, pioneers like Geisinger Health Systems has implemented the innovative PHR OpenNotes program. It has seen much greater systematic improvement than predicted.

Concerns
This increasing patient participation in healthcare brings about many concerns on the physician level:

- Time waste in and out of the office – Greater time commitment explaining and answering questions rather than giving care.
- Censorship in notes – Inability to be candid in notes taken

Geisinger’s OpenNotes program sees a low prevalence of these issues in comparison to the predictions. Instead, Geisinger has seen improvement in provided healthcare and patient satisfaction.

Outcomes
Contrary to the concern predictions, PCRs have seen great benefits.

- Prepared decision-making and planning
- Timing
- Prevention of mistakes
- Patient-provider communication

Through this OpenNotes program and other PHRs like it, patients are more equipped with information on their own healthcare. This results in maximizing the time in the office with informed communication and overall decrease in time spent in the office. Any discrepancy in perspectives of healthcare provided from physician to patient can be mitigated through this system. Patients are also able to aid doctors in preventing mistakes because of more informed communication. By including the patients as an active participant in their own healthcare, it results in greater trust in the system on the patient level and a form of support on the physician level. The PCR concept is still in its new stages, however it shows evidence in some health care systems to show great improvement and implications for quality care of the future.

For more information:

Bending the Curve Conference – Dr. John Darer