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A Multifaceted Approach to Improve Quarterly Visit Rates at a Pediatric Cystic Fibrosis Care Center

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Background

The Cystic Fibrosis Foundation recommends that patients with cystic fibrosis (CF) be evaluated at care centers every three months. Quarterly visits are important for monitoring nutritional and respiratory health and for providing education and anticipatory guidance to patients and caregivers. In 2016, Children's Mercy- Kansas City (CMKC) noted that quarterly visit rates had declined among patients of all age groups and were below the national average.

Methods

- Surveys of patients and families revealed that barriers to attending quarterly visits include
 - Distance to care center
 - Inconsistent access to transportation
 - Financial stressors
 - Lack of knowledge regarding the importance of quarterly visits
- The CF Quality Improvement Team developed a multifaceted initiative to increase quarterly visit rates including:
 - Patient and caregiver education through an article in CF Newsletter, presentation at CF Family Education Day and reminders in clinic
 - Changes in clinic flow to reduce total visit time, which was an independent quality improvement project
 - Changes to scheduling procedures allowing multiple follow-up visits to be scheduled at one time

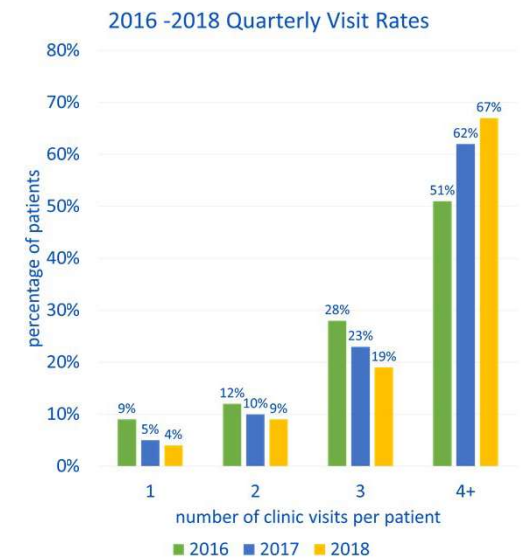
Methods

- Interim analysis of quarterly visit rates demonstrated a slower than anticipated improvement rate
- A database was developed to allow tracking of each patient's quarterly visits and to identify patients without visits scheduled in the upcoming quarter
- At the end of each month, nurses evaluated who had not been scheduled and contacted these families to schedule appointments
- Dedicated time was designated for nurses to collect appointment data
- Social Workers were available, when needed, to address any barriers to appointment scheduling

Results

- Data from 2017 and 2018 indicated an increase in the percentage of patients with four visits per year and a proportionate decrease in those with less than the recommended number of visits
 - In 2017, there was an 11% increase in patients with four visits
 - Improvement was sustained in 2018, with an additional 5% increase in the percent of patients with four visits

Results



Conclusions

- Standard quality improvement methodology was used to improve quarterly visit rates among cystic fibrosis patients at Children's Mercy Kansas City Cystic Fibrosis Center
 - A family-centered, team-based approach was adopted
 - A change in culture led to sustained improvement
- Improved quarterly visit rates should drive improvement in outcomes including pulmonary function and nutritional status