

Behavioral Health Follow-up within 7 Days of Hospital Discharge

A Quality Improvement Project
from the Partners For Kids Quality Improvement Coaching Program

Project Overview

The Partners For Kids (PFK) Quality Improvement (QI) Coaching Program offers a QI project to assist community behavioral health providers with meeting the Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS) goal of providing follow-up care within seven days of discharge for patients 6 years of age and older who have been hospitalized for primary behavioral health concerns.

Rationale

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) reports that approximately 17% of youth, 6-17 years of age, are diagnosed with a mental health disorder each year. The 10 year rise in pediatric hospitalizations in U.S. children's hospitals is 5 times greater for children with a psychiatric diagnosis. These children can be vulnerable so post-discharge and follow-up care by trained mental health clinicians is critical. Research suggests that, post-discharge follow-up, ideally within 7 days of discharge, results in improved health outcomes and lower readmission rates.

Project Components

- Develop operational processes for **identifying and tracking** discharged patients
- **Facilitate communication and build relationships** with discharging hospitals
- Implement a **standardized appointment process** to ensure follow-up occurs within 7 days of hospital discharge

Practice Benefits

- Achieve improved patient outcomes
- Align with behavioral health provider incentive plan
- Strengthen QI knowledge and skills to improve other processes
- Customize to fit your practice

Support Resources Available

- Access and support from PFK QI specialists
- Training from Nationwide Children's Hospital (NCH) affiliated Behavioral Health specialists
- Access to PFK Care Coordination services and PFK Behavioral Health team
- Data support using your practice's Electronic Health Record (EHR) and claims data

For more information about PFK QI projects, please contact PFK QI Coaching at PFKQICoaching@NationwideChildrens.org

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