Vulnerable in the Valley: Assessing Homelessness Prevalence in the LVHN Patient Population

Yasir Abunamous MS
USF MCOM- LVHN Campus, Yasir.Abunamous@lvhn.org

Follow this and additional works at: http://scholarlyworks.lvhn.org/select-program

Part of the Medical Education Commons

Published In/Presented At

This Poster is brought to you for free and open access by LVHN Scholarly Works. It has been accepted for inclusion in LVHN Scholarly Works by an authorized administrator. For more information, please contact LibraryServices@lvhn.org.
Vulnerable in the Valley: Assessing Homelessness Prevalence in the LVHN Patient Population

Yasir Abunamous, MS-IV
Project Mentor: Brett Feldman, PA-C
Lehigh Valley Health Network, Allentown, PA

Background

A National Problem, A Local Problem
- Social determinants of health recognized as highly influential on health outcomes – few more so than housing
- Traditional models of care delivery have proven ineffective for this population:
  - Emergency Department utilized heavily for care – a documented trend
  - Estimated 80% of such ED visits could be prevented by adequate primary care
  - Avg. LOS 4 days > than housed population; 30-day readmission rate 10x higher
- Estimated 10,500 homeless individuals in Lehigh Valley
- Unreimbursed care at LVHN: Minimum of $150 per ED visit, avg. of $20,000 per admission

Seeking a Solution
- LVHN Street Medicine Team & Consult Service – filling a longstanding void
  - Still, LVHN unable to report actual utilization rates or cost of care for homeless individuals
    - Majority of care settings do not have standardized approach to screening for (and responding to) homelessness
  - Prevalence estimates would provide invaluable springboard for Street Medicine Team and community

Project Design

Piloting a Screening Tool
- In an attempt to address dearth of data related to homelessness, a screening questionnaire was devised

- Multidisciplinary volunteer force for survey administration:
  - Medical Students (USF Health MCOM)
  - Physician Assistant Students (DeSales University)
  - Medical Residents (Family, Emergency, and Internal Medicine)
- Multi-phase screening process:
  - Initial round to occur within three LVHN ED’s (Cedar Crest, 17th Street, Muhlenberg) for specified period of time
  - Results may suggest need to repeat screening to offset variables such as seasonal variations in ED visits
  - Subsequent screening to include various identified high-volume outpatient primary care practices
  - Target outcome of ongoing Network-wide screening initiative

Project Design

Plan

Act

Do

Study

Results

- Initial round of screening awaiting final departmental approval
- Upon completion of Phase 1, mechanisms of data collection and reporting will be closely analyzed, and optimized as needed
- Results from preliminary round(s) will dictate the need for further screening efforts

Conclusions

Next Steps

- Directing screening teams, coordination with host sites
- Integration of screening tool into Epic (as well as outpatient and inpatient care processes)

“Change is the Only Constant”

- Effecting institutional change via engagement with the “SELECT competencies”:
  - Health Systems
  - Leadership
  - Values-Based Patient-Centered Care
- Establishing the “burning platform,” and expanding LVHN Street Medicine

“Excellence is a process – not an accident”

References

© 2015 Lehigh Valley Health Network