Cutting Readmissions by 32% With Provider-Patient Texting

Park Nicollet®

Health System
HealthPartners

Hospital
Park Nicollet
Methodist Hospital

Location
St. Louis Park, Minnesota

Implemented Solution
PerfectServe Patient &
Family Communication
(PFC)

Integrations
Epic

Park Nicollet Methodist Hospital is a 400-bed facility in St. Louis Park, Minnesota renowned for high quality patient care, medical expertise, and disease management. Park Nicollet Methodist Hospital is part of Park Nicollet Health Services and HealthPartners.

Challenges

Readmission rates are a key factor in quality ratings and reimbursement, but lowering them can be a challenge. While following up with patients post discharge is proven to reduce readmission rates, reaching patients by phone is difficult and time-consuming.

Park Nicollet's nurses were spending a significant amount of time calling patients and leaving messages, but readmission goals still weren't being met. The organization needed a solution to reach more patients without increasing nursing workload.

Solution

Park Nicollet's Vice President of Primary Care Joan Sandstrom and her team partnered with PerfectServe to implement an automated, text-first patient follow-up solution.

We were skeptical as to whether older patients would use this channel, but the response has been impressive. We have such a hard time getting some patients to answer a phone call, yet they will respond to assessments delivered by text. This saves valuable time for our nurses every day and helps us reach those in need more quickly.
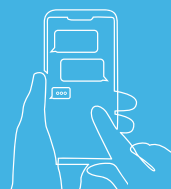
– Karen Loscheider

Manager, Nurse Line & Central Refill Department, Park Nicollet Health Services

32%
Drop in
Readmission Rate

70%
Response
Rate

25%
Reduction in
Nurse Phone Calls

About PerfectServe

PerfectServe offers unified healthcare communication and scheduling solutions to help physicians, nurses, and care team members provide exceptional care to more than 20 million patients every year. By automating workflows, speeding time to care, optimizing shift schedules, and streamlining communication, PerfectServe reduces care team toil and improves patient safety.

To learn more or schedule a demo, please contact us:

866.844.5484
sales@perfectserve.com

Or visit us online:
perfectserve.com

Implementation

PerfectServe built a series of customized follow-up text messages to assess each patient's risk for readmission. Through integration with Park Nicollet's ADT system, messages could be automatically triggered with each discharge event.

Each text would clearly identify Park Nicollet as the sender and ask the patient a question, such as how they are feeling or if they've resumed their medications. The final text would always include a telephone number open 24/7 for questions.

The PerfectServe online dashboard was set up to collect and analyze all patient responses and nonresponses, automatically flagging patients in need of follow-up. Nurses could access a global view of their patient population and focus their attention on those most at risk for readmission.

Results

The organization found that patients who received and responded to text messages were 32% less likely to be readmitted than those who were solely contacted by phone (results are risk-adjusted to account for the relative complexity of each patient's conditions).

Overall, 70% of questions sent via text message received a response from patients, reducing the number of phone calls from nurses by 25%. PerfectServe made it possible to segment Park Nicollet's patient population into risk categories, highlighting the 17% of cases that needed immediate follow-up.

The results spoke for themselves. It was clear right away how the quality of care we provide to our patients and information we have for our teams could be improved with this tool."

– Jasmine Larson
Director, Data & Analytics, Park Nicollet Health Services

Conclusion

Park Nicollet Methodist Hospital's results were so impressive that the organization's Readmission Council elected to expand the PerfectServe solution to other hospitals in the HealthPartners system. The solution has helped overcome the challenge of patients ignoring phone calls from unfamiliar numbers, eliminating the game of phone tag between patients and nursing staff to refocus valuable time on direct patient care.