Increasing Patient Access in the Mayo Clinic Department of Neurology by Creating a High Throughput Clinic


Mayo Clinic

Background

Problem Statement

High demand for neurological services combined with limited access to neurologists has resulted in significant patient wait times and provider burnout.

Mayo Clinic in Arizona has been particularly focused on ensuring patients needing specialized neurological services have timely appointment access. The autonomic team identified three challenges negatively impacting patient appointment access:

• Limited providers within this subspecialty
• Inefficiencies in clinical appointments
• Patients desiring follow-up exclusively with the physician

Planning

The objectives of the High Throughput Autonomic Clinic:

• Improve patient access
• Reduce the time between initial evaluation and the establishment of a treatment plan
• Leverage the team-based model to provide more timely and efficient longitudinal care

The autonomic team proposed the creation of a multi-provider clinic that would increase patient access while ensuring new patients had the opportunity to meet with the physician and receive valuable education prior to their visit. The team determined essential patient information prior to a visit, thereby creating a robust, pre-visit triage process and affording the ability to pre-order necessary diagnostic testing.

Traditional Clinic

Patient is scheduled with no details and presents to see the provider, the provider spends the majority of the appointment reviewing prior medical history and other non-essential components.

High Throughput Clinic

Patients are screened by nurses using the pre-visit triage and request necessary testing, the secretary schedules them for a follow-up call with the nurse to review and document past medical history, allergies, results of prior diagnostic evaluations, and medications. This information was documented in the medical record.

Implementation

All team members played a critical role in the implementation of the new clinic:

• Prior to scheduling patients, the nurse reviewed the patient appointment request to identify appropriateness and schedule necessary testing following the initial appointment.

• Once patients were identified, the medical practice secretary scheduled the patient for a 2.5-hour block of time and prepared them for a follow-up call with the nurse to review and document past medical history, allergies, results of prior diagnostic evaluations, and medications. This information was documented in the medical record.

• Patients were scheduled in groups of five and roomed in groups of 2 to 3.

• Patients who saw the advanced practitioner first, would then visit with the physician to discuss diagnosis and review the treatment plan. This pre-visit information allowed the physician and advanced practitioner providers to be better prepared for the visit and reduced the clerical burden following the visit.

• The nurse would conclude the visit by providing education for longitudinal care and post-visit expectations.

In the High Throughput Clinic the pre-visit activity is essential to optimizing the appointment and achieving success.

Results

• The new clinic model increased patient appointment access by 300%.

• Patient feedback has been exceptionally positive.

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• According to the clinicians, the efficient use of clinical time is the paramount benefit of the High Throughput Clinic.

• Patients present with preliminary questions and medications verified which allows the provider to focus primarily on the patient and their clinical issues, through a reduction in non-essential documentation and clerical duties.

Contact: Britany Williams – Operations Manager
Mayo Clinic in Arizona
Williams.britany@mayo.edu

Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>% of Patients</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Did you feel you received very good or excellent service from the staff?</td>
<td>0.875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you recommend the provider to a friend or family member?</td>
<td>0.875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Were you satisfied with your visit?</td>
<td>0.940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Were you satisfied with the amount of time the provider spent addressing your needs?</td>
<td>0.857</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Table 1: Results of Patients