



the Pulse



Health Services
LOS ANGELES COUNTY

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Director's Desk

Christina R. Ghaly, MD
Director

This issue of the Pulse highlights our phenomenal performance on PRIME metrics. As a result of our collective work, our patients have higher rates of compliance with preventive health services such as colon cancer, cervical, and breast cancer screening. They also have their medication lists reconciled at each encounter; have greater access to palliative care services; and have improved control of chronic diseases and their risk factors, such as high blood pressure, diabetes and tobacco use. I am especially grateful to the 21 individuals who have

served as leaders of one or more PRIME measures. Your creativity and dedication will have a lasting impact on the health of our patients.

Please join the challenge to enroll our patients in the DHS Patient Portal! Using the Portal, patients can check up on their lab and radiology results, communicate with their provider and his/her team, refill prescriptions, reschedule appointments, among other functions. This is a great way for patients to receive information and services they need right from their homes. Please encourage the patients you interact with to enroll today!

Finally, please find time this holiday season to celebrate the people you work with every day at DHS. We have an incredibly talented and dedicated workforce. Please be generous in sharing with one another the ways in which you appreciate the contributions everyone makes. To each of you, I want to wish you and your family all the best this holiday season!

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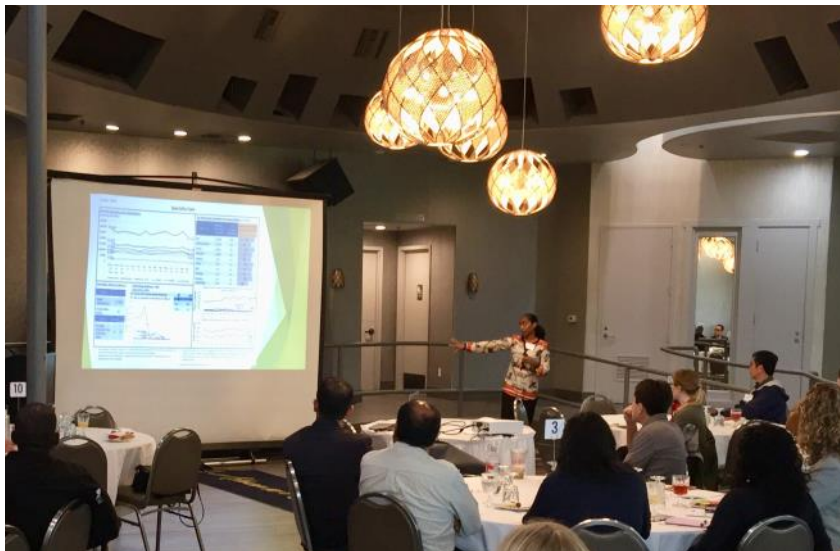
DHS Specialty Care Forum: Hearing from the Front Line

By S. Monica Soni, MD

The Department of Health Services (DHS) Specialty Care Initiative hosted a Specialty Care Forum with 70 clinicians in attendance on November 8, 2018 at Almansor Court in Alhambra. The forum is one of several approaches the Specialty Care team is implementing to improve the experience of primary care providers using eConsult to get feedback from front line clinicians. The providers hailed from the Community Partner clinics that serve My Health LA patients, primary care clinics and specialty clinics. The forum was sponsored by grant funding from the Blue Shield of California Foundation. The meeting allowed for networking between primary and specialty care providers who discussed the eConsult platform, co-management of complex patients, as well as best practices and workflows. Presenters included Dr. Paul Giboney (Associate Chief Medical Officer), Dr. Monica Soni (Director of Specialty Care), Dr. Stan Dea (Director of eConsult), Nancy Cayasso-McIntosh, MPH (Analyst for Specialty Care Improvement Initiative), Shari Doi (Director of the Office of Patient Access) and Myra Garcia, RN (Manager of Specialty Care Linkage Unit).

As a snapshot, DHS performs between 67,000-78,000 specialty care visits monthly. The majority of specialty visits by volume take place at LAC+USC Medical Center, followed by Harbor-UCLA

Medical Center, Olive View-UCLA Medical Center and MLK Outpatient Center. Over 18,000 eConsults are requested each month with a median initial response time from our specialty reviewers of 24 hours. This rapid turnaround time allows primary care physicians to get immediate assistance on next steps for evaluation for their patient or management guidance. The specialties that receive the highest volume are ophthalmology, gastroenterology, orthopedics and obstetrics-gynecology with over 1,000 eConsults submitted per month.



eConsults are generated from DHS and Community Partners, as well as Correctional Health, Department of Mental Health and Department of Public Health providers.

The Office of Patient Access (OPA) discussed the significant restructuring made to the Specialty Linkage and scheduling process, which has improved access to appointments and reduced backlogs. In fiscal year 2017-2018, the unit fielded 129,574 calls. The team of 38 are each part of a specialty team for

scheduling, which includes Surgical, Medicine, Ancillary Women's and Pediatrics. This division allows the staff to become subject matter experts and understand the nuances of scheduling patients within a certain specialty. The phone lines are open Monday through Friday from 7:30 am to 5:30 pm and staff also make follow-up calls every other Saturday. The OPA has found creative, innovative solutions to the large volume of calls required to manage eConsult scheduling and

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have implemented robocalling and auto-dialing which have increased efficiency and results.

The attendees had the opportunity to share suggestions for improvement directly to the Specialty team, meet and learn from other providers facing similar challenges while earning Continuing Education Credit for their time. Ideas generated that will be explored include:

- Continued integration of eConsult with the electronic health record
- Educational roadshows to primary care clinics by reviewers from high volume specialties
- Webinar refreshers for end users on eConsult navigation



Initiatives

Third Year PRIME Updates and Introducing the Quality Incentive Pool

By Paul Giboney, MD

Regular readers of the PULSE are likely familiar with the PRIME program – the 2020 Medicaid Waiver initiative that incentivizes improvements in patient care delivery. DHS has just completed the third year of the program. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) have continued to increase the available funding tied to “value-based” programs, like PRIME. In collaboration with the State of California and Medi-Cal Health Plans, CMS has launched another program, the Quality Incentive Pool or “QIP”, which adds another 20 clinical measures to the performance improvement efforts. These measures are in the domains of Primary Care, Specialty Care, Inpatient Care and Resource Utilization. As with PRIME, clinician leaders across the system have been asked to take the lead on helping to improve patient care in these important areas. The Department is grateful for their dedication to great patient care and their commitment to innovation.

Such leadership enabled DHS’ third PRIME year to be quite successful in terms of capturing over 99% of available funding. Even more importantly, these clinician leaders led excellent advances in patient care. In the first three years of PRIME, DHS has seen screen-

ing rates for 3 key cancers (breast, colorectal and cervical) improve by an aggregate of 12.5%, this means that thousands of additional patients have received appropriate age- and risk-based cancer screening. The Department has also saved lives and prevented illness by almost doubling the influenza vaccination rate. Our maternity services have invested significantly in promoting breastfeeding and reducing rates of cesarean sections. And significantly, the antibiotic stewardship programs have reduced inappropriate prescribing of antibiotics by 50%.

The current performance year will focus on dozens of new measures in both the PRIME and QIP programs that will require even more improvements to pull down the critical federal funds. The structure of both programs requires DHS to report frequently and extensively. Because of this, we are grateful for the work of our data analytics and quality nursing teams who spend countless hours ensuring our information is timely and accurate.

PRIME and QIP Leads

| | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Stacy Barron | Carlin Rooke | Susan Stein |
| Chase Coffey | Erin Saleeby | Jay Thomas |
| Christine Dauphine | Stephen Sener | Shannon Thyne |
| Stan Dea | Tyler Seto | Amy Towfighi |
| Osahon Ekhaese | Elizabeth Seung | Kevin Vu |
| Paul Giboney | Jagruti Shukla | |
| Gregory Idos | Monica Soni | |
| Andy Lee | Brad Spellberg | |

Around DHS

MyWellness Patient Portal Enrollment Competition Kicks Off

By Damiyah McKell and Ismael Chinchilla

On November 1, 2018, DHS kicked off a department-wide MyWellness Patient Portal enrollment competition for staff. The MyWellness Patient Portal is a website and mobile app that allows patients to take control of their health. Patients are able to use MyWellness to:

- Schedule appointments
- Refill prescriptions
- Message their provider and medical team
- View lab and radiology results
- View provider notes

When staff help patients sign up for the portal, lines in our waiting rooms can be reduced since so many routine actions can be handled online. This will help us improve direct care for the patients in our clinics, ER's and hospitals.

The competition is as follows: Staff invite patients to register for the MyWellness Patient Portal during any stage of their hospital and clinical visit (Intake, Clinical, Pharmacy, Labs etc.). Once patients receive the email, they can register online and start managing their health.

The competition will last for three months from November 2018 to January 2019. At the end of every month, the service team with the highest number of enrollments will be rewarded with a celebratory party: a Pie Party in November 2018, a Tamale Party in December 2018 and a Pizza Party in January 2019. The persons with the highest individual number of enrollments in November 2018, December 2018 and January 2019 will be featured in a marketing campaign (three separate winners).



The impact of MyWellness Patient Portal is already being felt. “Just last week, my patient avoided an ER visit for worsening asthma by messaging me through the portal. My older patients have wonderful family caregivers who communicate with the clinic via the portal. My patients love being able to see their lab results and read my notes. I personally save time by messaging patients through the portal instead of relying on repeated phone calls and voicemails,” said Dr. Anshu Abhat, Director of Digital Patient Engagement.

For more information on how to enroll patients or the competition visit: bit.ly/patientportalsharepoint. For specific questions on how to enroll patients or the competition details email: maketing@dhs.lacounty.gov or call (626) 525-5333.