Managing Uncontrolled Hypertension

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**Problem**
- Hypertension is the number one risk factor for cardiac deaths in the U.S.
- Nearly half of American adults have high blood pressure (bp >140/90) and we know patients monitored with electronic records of daily bp readings in between visits have reduced ER visits.
- In May 2021, 50% of UCM patients were identified to have uncontrolled hypertension, without a scheduled follow-up appointment within 2 months and a recorded blood pressure (bp) greater than 140/90. This problem is related to the UCM 2021 Annual Operating Plan – Quality & Safety: Improve Hypertension Control

**Goal**
- To assist patients with self-reporting bp using MyChart and helping them better manage their hypertension when necessary.
- Activating patients in self-managing their uncontrolled hypertension, by helping them monitor their bp and taking necessary next steps if it is uncontrolled.
- SMART AIM: To receive self-reported bp flowsheets from 5% of eligible patients by June 30th, 2021.

**Strategy**
- Using eligibility criteria in Epic, we generated a list of patients with an elevated bp seen within the last two months.
- The population health nurses performed mass outreach via MyChart for patients with bp >140/90.
- They attached a flowsheet to message 1 requesting patients to provide their most recent bp reading. If bp was elevated, patient encouraged to follow up with PCP or go to urgent care in message 2.
- The phone call also included education on when to seek medical attention and diet while encouraging patients to discuss bp monitoring frequency and appropriate bp range with their PCP.

**Results to Date**
- 2,000+ pts. contacted
- 210 patient responses received
- 2% improvement between May and June

**PATIENT COMMENTS**
- I am taking my medicine and do not need a refill of the prescription at this time. However, I have ordered a blood pressure monitor from Livongo and am waiting for it to arrive. When it comes in and I use it, I will certainly forward that information to you.
- Do you think I need to come back to have my pressure reading updated? I'd be more than willing to return. I am trying to keep my pressure in check and have been paying more attention to my diet. Just like so many others, I gained weight during the pandemic.
- Again, thank you and keep me posted.

**Conclusions**
- By following up with patients via MyChart/Telephone, we were able to assist patients with confidently self-managing their hypertension.
- As a next step, we’d like to be more proactive with identifying patients with elevated blood pressure on a regular basis. To successfully manage this condition, we need to increase patient access to quality care and continue to provide education/resources.
- As a result of this successful intervention, a medication titration nurse-driven protocol was developed and will be implemented in Primary Care for patients with uncontrolled hypertension, increasing access to care and decreasing costs.

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