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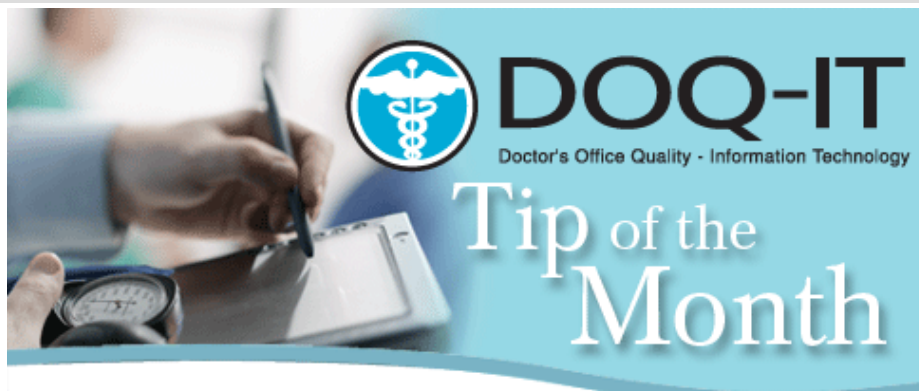
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June 2007

DOQ-IT Webinar Series



Electronic Implementation of Care Management Into Your Office

Presented by Dr. Tom Hargrove
Tuesday, July 10, 2007
1:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m. CDT

In this webinar, Dr. Hargrove will share his experience with a focus on the basics of how to get started in electronic care management. Physicians and office managers, if your office is electronic and you wish to look further into disease tracking and improving patient care, you do not want to miss this webinar! **Call Michelle Teague today at 1-866-439-8863 or e-mail her at mteague@txqio.sdps.org to**

Electronic Care Management Benefits Patients, Physicians

Dr. Tom Hargrove has been in clinical practice for 16 years and has been involved with electronic health records (EHRs) for the past six. In addition to his part-time pediatric practice, Hargrove serves as the medical director for informatics for Trinity Mother Frances Health System in Tyler, Texas.

Since 2004, Trinity Mother Frances has been using electronic care management, which is the practice of using EHRs to track outcomes and performance on specific quality measures.

"Our board of directors, our leaders, decided that we didn't want to be average in this area. We wanted to be a national leader in clinical quality, so we set a goal to become a national leader," Hargrove shares. The practice decided to institute electronic care management, setting goals for improvement that would ultimately reach the national benchmark. "It seemed clear to really gather [data] on a meaningful basis, we needed to figure out what pieces of clinical information you needed to collect, and to organize that and standardize that, and then to use that to improve. We did not expect physicians to perform at national best practice levels immediately. We have increased our internal goals over the years of the program."

Electronic care management is now the cornerstone of the practice. "It goes back to the old adage, you manage what you measure," Hargrove offers.

Trinity Mother Frances' care management program is innovative and shows just how beneficial EHRs can be for much more than improving office organization. "I think that from a patient care point of view, we've seen improvement in many of our individual providers in the processes that we've measured, things like colorectal screening and breast cancer screening and immunizations... We're improving the process we use to deliver [care] to patients," Hargrove explains. "We use the electronic health record as a tool to remind us; also to recall patients, [when] we know that they're not compliant." This allows physicians to then advise patients on recommended preventive care practices, such as colorectal screenings or mammograms.

register for this webinar!

Please provide the name of your practice and your e-mail address. You will receive an e-mail with details for attending the webinar(s) once you register.

TMF Health Quality Institute works with many different health care providers-not just physician offices. TMF staff assists hospitals, nursing homes and home health agencies with quality improvement efforts on topics like surgical infection prevention, pressure ulcers, and reducing avoidable re-hospitalizations.



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Physicians also benefit from following clinically recommended best practices. Says Hargrove, "We made this an internal pay-for-performance project. There was some concern on the physician part-is this going to affect my income?" The real draw was that, unlike with Medicare or insurance reimbursement, this was a financial issue physicians could have clinical control over. "Physicians face those [financial] risks all of the time," Hargrove adds. Trinity Mother Frances' program was a way to offer physicians more financial stability.

Although the practice faced some resistance to program implementation, Hargrove says that for the most part, physicians have taken to it and recognize the benefits. "It's something for them to be proud of. I think once we got them engaged and they realized what they could do with it, it was better."

The program is not intended to penalize physicians if their patients refuse to be compliant. The goal is to encourage physicians to check on the status of patient preventive care practices. If patients refuse to comply, the physician isn't expected to force them to take a test they don't want. Hargrove cites colorectal cancer screening as an example. Nationally, the best practice is to have 60 percent compliance. Physicians at Trinity Mother Frances are then expected to achieve that 60 percent benchmark.

"Most physicians know what they want to do and intend to do," Hargrove concludes. "It encourages physicians to educate and communicate with their patients better."

Dr. Hargrove will discuss electronic care management at a web-based presentation sponsored by TMF Health Quality Institute. See the sidebar for more information.

A Texas-Sized Thank You

TMF Health Quality Institute would like to thank all physician practices that have been working with us on the DOQ-IT initiative. We appreciate your ongoing dedication to improving the lives of your patients.

We also want you to get the credit you deserve for all of your efforts! The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) will be sending a letter inviting you to complete the Offices Systems Survey (OSS). The OSS gives you a chance to show the work you have accomplished as DOQ-IT participants.

When you receive the letter, contact your DOQ-IT consultant for an appointment so he or she can make sure you have all the information you need to complete the survey and to provide any help that you may need along the way.

You will also receive a two-page OSS Information Sheet, which provides an overview of each section of the OSS, along with some tips for ensuring that the information you are providing is correct.

So look for the OSS in mid-July and don't miss out on this opportunity to share all that you have done. We have enjoyed working with all of you!

The Launch of PQRI

July 1 marks the start of the Physician Quality Reporting Initiative (PQRI). Eligible professionals who choose to participate and successfully report on a designated set of quality measures for services paid under the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule and provided between July 1 and December 31, 2007, may earn a bonus payment of up to 1.5 percent of their charges during that period, subject to a cap.

TMF, in conjunction with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) hosted three live events to introduce PQRI to Texas physicians. If you weren't able to attend one of the meetings, you can still access several resources on the Web:

- Visit www.tmf.org/pqri/pvrp for general information, including a recording of "The ABCs of PQRI" teleconference held in May.
- Visit www.cms.hhs.gov/PQRI for more detailed material, including information on CMS-sponsored teleconferences (click on "CMS Sponsored Calls").

You can also contact your DOQ-IT consultant for more information on PQRI.

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