Improving Access to Specialty Care for Health Center Patients

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Overview of Lynn Community Health Center:
Lynn Community Health Center is a non-profit, multicultural, community health center located in the heart of Lynn, MA serving over 40,000 patients. Their mission is to provide comprehensive health care to everyone in the community, regardless of ability to pay. The target population is those who experience the greatest barriers to care: children and their families, the poor, minorities, non-English speaking, seniors, and the frail elderly. Patient demographics:
• Economic Status. Over 90% of the health center’s patients live at or below 200% of the federal poverty level
• Race/Ethnicity. 51% Latino, 23% Black/African American
• Language. 59% of patients are best served in a language other than English

Overview of North Shore Medical Center
North Shore Medical Center (NSMC), located on the North Shore of Boston, MA, is the region’s largest healthcare provider with multiple hospitals, ambulatory care sites and physician offices. North Shore Physicians Group (NSPG) is a multi-specialty physician network affiliated with NSMC. More than 300 NSPG physicians, nurse practitioners and health care professionals offer a wide range of primary and specialty care services in 22 locations throughout Boston’s North Shore. NSPG Gastroenterology includes 12 providers in four different locations specializing in the diagnosis and treatment of diseases of the esophagus, stomach, small intestine, large intestine, colon, rectum, liver, gallbladder, pancreas and biliary tract.

IMPROVE COMMUNICATION Between LCHC and NSPG ABOUT THE REFERRAL
• Initial request
• Records received
• Status of referral

IMPROVE COMMUNICATION Between NSPG and the patient ABOUT THE APPOINTMENT
• Reach patient effectively
• Communicate effectively

IMPROVE COMMUNICATION Between LCHC and the patient ABOUT KEEPING THE APPOINTMENT
• Reminder
• Family/Caregiver engagement (if needed)
• Transportation arrangements
• Prep for appointment (endoscopy prep)

About Us

1,712 Total GI Referrals
GI Referrals to NSPG made by Navigator

Records received, NSPG will offer appointment
Patient contacted and appointment offered
Patient arrives for appointment
Consultation note received by LCHC

Records not received or not recognized. Records re-sent. No appointment offered without records. Cycles of re-work and confusion.
Trouble reaching patient, family contacts not known, appointment information not sent in patient’s preferred language.
Patient not clear on appointment (language barrier), appointment not kept (transportation, etc.), prep not done (for endoscopy)

LCHC patients could receive all the GI care they need locally but for a variety of reasons, they must travel significant distances into Boston for care. This substantially increases one of their most frequently cited barriers to care: Transportation

Current State
Multiple NSPG office staff, reached randomly by phone, give inconsistent information.

Future State
Point person at NSPG for communication with LCHC about referrals.

256 patients will arrive for GI appointment at NSPG and consult is done

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Proposed Interventions