
Hospital Focuses on Community Engagement to Help Reduce Readmissions

April 8, 2013

Interview Title:

Methodist South Strives to Create a “Heart Healthy” Community

Result:

In 2011, Methodist South Hospital’s readmission rate for all causes was 23 percent. As of August 2012 that rate had dropped to 20 percent. During the same time period, the hospital also reduced readmission rates among heart failure patients by 5 percent.

Institution:

Methodist South Hospital
1300 Wesley Drive
Memphis, TN 38116

Profile:

Methodist South Hospital is a 156-bed community hospital that provides a full array of surgical and medical services.

Contact:

Lanitra Harris
Project Coordinator
P: (901) 516-3884
Lanitra.Harris@mlh.org

Innovation implementation:

Methodist South Hospital serves a large population of minority cardiac patients. With a high rate of heart failure readmissions, the hospital staff understood that patients needed to be better equipped to manage their condition in order to avoid unnecessary hospitalizations.

The hospital formed a multidisciplinary 18-member in-hospital team to develop interventions targeted at reducing the hospital’s readmissions rate. A key intervention implemented by the team was to engage the community in supporting education around heart failure care.

The hospital sponsored a community-wide kick-off event to educate and engage community members about maintaining a healthy heart and inform them of the hospital’s new efforts to improve outcomes for heart failure patients. Working with its local media outlets to publicize the event, the hospital drew an audience of close to 100 people consisting of local health organizations, congregational leaders, community members, health care providers, and others.

Following the briefing, the hospital began holding “Lunch and Learn”, a series of free, educational seminars open to the public to discuss topics related to caring for heart failure. Each session featured a guest speaker who covered topics relevant for patients with heart conditions such as nutrition, exercise and medications. The hospital’s internal marketing team helped publicize the sessions through media, community stakeholders such as the Congregational Health Network and other communication channels.

Along with the educational efforts, the team implemented other initiatives such as using the teach-back method at discharge, developing a chronic heart failure (CHF) educational toolkit for patients and revising its readmit patient interview questions. Methodist South also hired an advanced nurse practitioner (ANP) to lead its hospital-based CHF clinic. In this newly-added role, the ANP provides CHF patients and their family members with continued education and ongoing support about how to best manage the disease.

Our mission: to improve the health and health care of all Americans.

© 2001–2013 Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. All Rights Reserved.