The Opportunity for the Clinical Nurse Leader Role in Transitional Care Leadership

Pamela Kohlbry, PhD, RN, CNL    JoAnn Daugherty, PhD, RN, CNL
Joy Gorzeman, MBA, RN, NEA-BC    Joseph A. Parker, MSN, BSN, RN, CNL

Purpose Statement
To describe the opportunity for leadership in transitional care by the Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL)

Background
• 1998 Institute of Medicine Report
• 2007 CNL White Paper
• 2010 Future of Nursing Report
• 2010 Affordable Care Act
• 2012 Care Transitions Demonstration Project Center for Medicare Services (CMS)

Problem
Leadership in transitional care is often missing resulting in healthcare challenges related to errors, poor quality care & outcomes

Challenges to Care
Chronically ill patients’ experience in healthcare
• Lack of Transitional Care
• Fragmentation of Care/Specialization
• Lack of IPC
• Lack of Communication
• Increased Cost
• Increased Readmissions
• Ineffective/Inefficient Care
• Decreased Quality Care

Collaboration/Teamwork
• Provide mentoring & coaching to the team of varied but complimentary backgrounds
• Promote lateral integration resulting in physician & colleague satisfaction with transition process & improved patient outcomes

CNL Competencies
Quality Improvement & Safety Through Care Navigation
• Lead the implementation of a process that results in improved medication safety, reduced readmissions, & increased financial savings
• Promote an environment that enhances high level communication, patient advocacy & professionalism
• Facilitate accountability & improved handoffs during care transitions
• Utilize system data sets to create sustainable processes based on patient outcomes

Project Activities
• Created a model for management of transitions of care across the continuum
• CNL-led healthcare coach (HCC) team supported transitions of high risk Medicare patients (chronically ill population)
• HCC team partnered with community agency for follow up

Project Outcomes
• $15.7 million Medicare savings/2 year period
• Decreased readmissions (1,319 over 2 years)
• Decreased med errors
• Increased quality patient education
• Improved interprofessional communication & teamwork

Recommendations
Clinical Practice
• Increase the number of CNLs leading transitional care teams
• Institute CNLs to lead transitions of care for the chronically ill
• Make the economic case for CNL leadership in transitions of care

Education
• Emphasize transition of care education in CNL curriculum
• Provide training on the economics of transitions of care
• Educate regarding interprofessional collaboration approaches & strategies in transitional care

Research & Evidence-Based Practice
• Examine CNLs’ role & impact internationally
• Explore the impact of implementation of CNL leadership with transitions of care
• Study the impact of the CNL as leader of care transitions on patient satisfaction

References
pkohlby@csusm.edu  jgorzeman@csusm.edu  jdaugher@csusm.edu  joseph.parker@palomarhealth.org