



GDAHC Emergency Department Utilization Primary Care Access Pilot

BACKGROUND:

In the fall of 2008, GDAHC convened a multi-stakeholder Team to address Emergency Department Utilization (EDU), a top priority area identified by GDAHC's purchaser members. The Team's charge was to reduce unnecessary use of the Emergency Department. With facilitation from a University of Michigan Health System LEAN coach, the Team further refined its goal to reduce use of the ED for Primary Care Physician (PCP) treatable conditions and developed ten recommended actions that primary care physicians, hospitals and employers could implement to help achieve this goal. Then the Team, in partnership with Blue Care Network (BCN) and the Oakland Southfield Physicians, PC (OSP), established a methodology for measuring the community's use of ED's for PCP treatable conditions and laid the groundwork for collection of baseline data.

PILOT PURPOSE:

The purpose of the EDU Pilot is to demonstrate the challenges, barriers and successes with implementation of certain basic EDU Team recommendations for PCP actions and to measure any short term impact on ED use for PCP treatable conditions.

PILOT DESCRIPTION:

A toolkit of materials was developed for Pilot PCP's, including:

- Customized office patient brochure/welcome letter
- Sample script for after-hours telephone message
- Office template or procedure for:
 - Access to care, telephone triaging and appointment scheduling
 - Patient follow-up after office receives notice of ER visit
- Recommendations on how to use OSP Monthly ER visit reports

The toolkit was distributed to six OSP PCP practices selected to participate in the Pilot. They tracked characteristics of the PCP practices and the date each of the toolkit items was implemented in the practice. Data was collected for six additional OSP PCP practices as a Control Group. For the three year prior to implementation of the toolkit items, baseline data for both the Pilot and Control Group practices was collected.

