



# Improving Patients' Perceptions of Care with Efficient Discharge Planning: A Quality Improvement Project

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## Background

Studies suggested that interventions that improve discharge planning for inpatients can improve health status, patient satisfaction, decrease gaps in the transition of care, minimize costs of rehospitalization, as well as decrease the risk of readmissions (King et al., 2019; Lam et al., 2019; Lin et al., 2018; Tyler et al., 2019).

Overlook Medical Center's inpatient behavioral health unit uses the Press Ganey® survey monthly to measure the patients' perception of care throughout their hospitalization. Factors contributing to low Press Ganey® scores include poor understanding of their medications, ineffective care coordination, and poor communication. As a quality improvement project, the interdisciplinary team focuses on transitions of care processes to improve patient experience and perceptions of care.

## Methods

TRANSITION PLAN OF CARE- begins immediately upon admission and is reviewed throughout the inpatient stay until discharge.

Pre-discharge meetings (PDM) are held with the patient and their families along with the interdisciplinary team one day prior to the discharge date and consist of the following interventions:

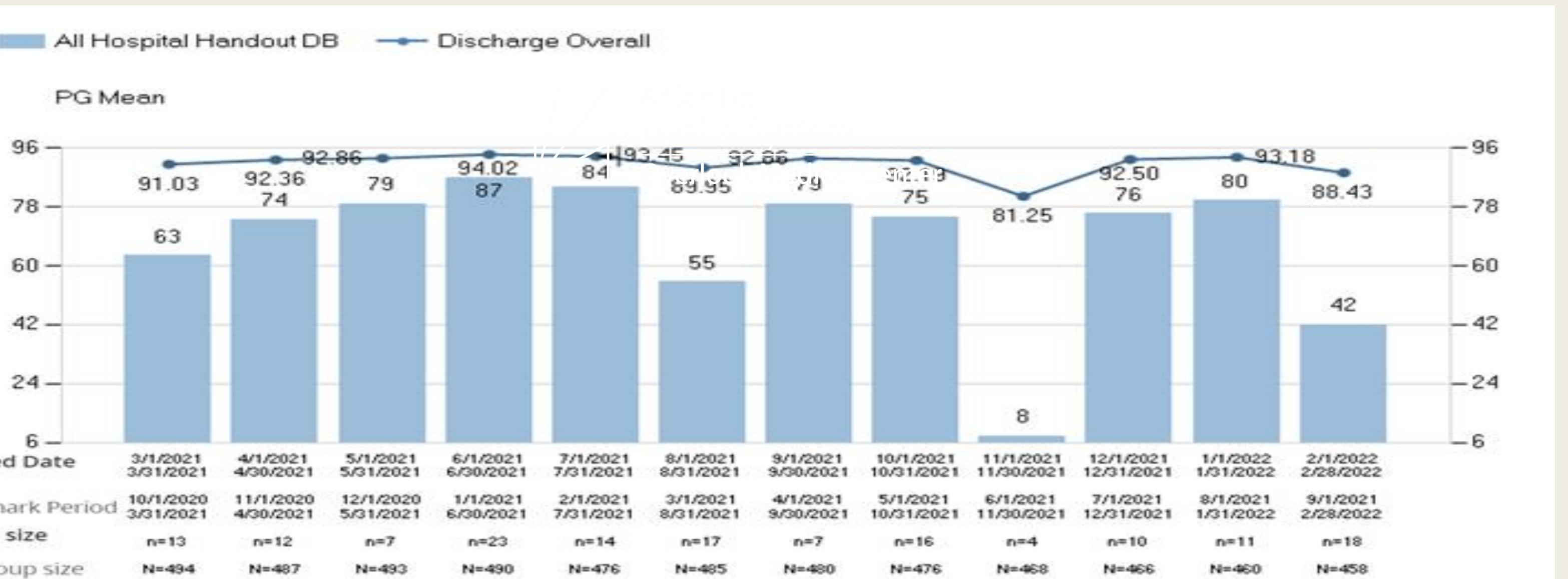
- Review of patient's understanding of discharge medications using the teach-back method
- Meds to Beds Initiative, i.e., in house pharmacy is notified and delivers the prescribed outpatient medications before the patient leaves the hospital
- Discuss and review transitions of care plan/ after-visit summary
- Identify any potential barriers to discharge, i.e., transportation
- Suicide risk assessment and suicide prevention plan
- Medication education groups conducted by RNs at least 2x/week and Discharge planning groups

## Results

The Press Ganey® trends of inpatient behavioral health indicated a rapid decline in the overall nursing and care provider scores since September 2020. The patient satisfaction scores decreased from 99% in August to 22% in December 2020. There were 193 surveys received in Quarter 4 and ranked at the 39<sup>th</sup> percentile in the overall discharge questions:

- Understand discharge medications instructions
- Information regarding aftercare
- Discharge instructions if need help

Since implementing the pre-discharge meetings and improving our discharge process starting in February 2021, overall Press Ganey® scores have improved. Over twelve months, from March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021 to February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022, percentiles ranged from 81.25%-94%, respectively.



Greatest Increases						
Survey Type	Question	Current n (2021)	Current Mean Score (2021)	Previous n (2020)	Previous Mean Score (2020)	Change
PG	Understand disch med instructions	207	93.24	435	88.51	4.73 <span style="color:blue;">▲</span>
PG	Helpfulness social/rec activities	209	90.67	453	87.03	3.64 <span style="color:blue;">▲</span>
PG	Info re care after discharge	208	91.35	435	87.93	3.42 <span style="color:blue;">▲</span>
PG	Helpfulness mindfulness training†	206	83.37	444	80.07	3.31 <span style="color:blue;">▲</span>
PG	Nurses' info re treatment program†	210	90.00	461	86.77	3.23 <span style="color:blue;">▲</span>

## Conclusion

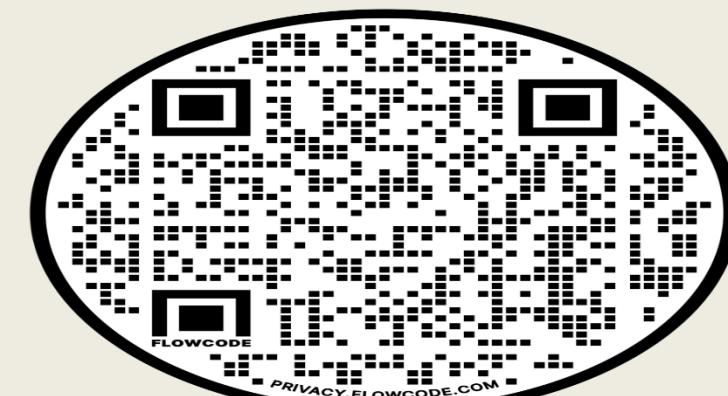
Evaluation of the new and improved discharge process will be based on monthly Press Ganey® reports. The overall goal is to see a consistent increase in patient satisfaction scores, mainly with patients' perception of their discharge medications and transitions of care.

During the Joint Commission designation of Disease - Specific re-Certification (DSC) for patients with Major Depression, the surveyors were impressed with our pre-discharge meetings. One of the quality indicators for DSC is the pre-discharge meetings and follow-up phone calls post -discharge.

Efficient discharge planning involves interdisciplinary team collaboration and patient-centered interventions that will impact patient satisfaction and quality of care.



## References



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