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Leveraging EMRs and a Prevention Focused Clinic for Outreach and Prevention Efforts

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Abstract

Problem:

During the COVID 19 pandemic many Americans fell behind on their preventive health interventions including non-COVID vaccines. This combined with overworked primary care physicians who have less and less time with their patients has led to many patients falling behind on their preventive care interventions. In addition, the increasingly fragmented system has led to patients having deficiencies in their care that they are unaware of. Care across many different systems as well as in their local pharmacies without a consistent record of what they still require has exacerbated this problem by not giving PCPs a clear picture.

Methods

The Veterans Affairs medical system leverages their EMR to create “reminders” for all the preventive interventions. We interrogated the EMR to find out how many and which of our veterans were due/overdue for their pneumonia vaccine, based on the reminders. We used this list as a starting point to create a specific resident run vaccine and prevention clinic, that allowed for dedicated time to counsel patients as well as, vaccinate them for any outstanding vaccines.

Results

The inquiry into the EMR resulted in a list of over 7000 patients. Of that we contacted 506 patients and counseled on vaccinations and

preventive care, 130 patients were scheduled for a clinic visit, 73 veterans had received their vaccines and care outside the VA. 93 kept their appointments and were seen in clinic, and 87 vaccines were given in our clinic. Of those we gave a total of 56 pneumonia vaccines, 12 Tdap vaccines, 14 Shingles vaccines 3 combination Hepatitis A/B, 1 hepatitis B and one HPV vaccine.

Conclusion

We believe a dedicated prevention outreach effort and clinic will assist systems in ensuring that they are consistently staying on top of preventive interventions without taking away the much-needed time in primary care appointments to handle chronic conditions.