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Outcomes of integrating smart phrase interface technology to improve cancer symptom management

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Purpose: Using default's collaborative translational research model, this study's goal is to integrate, evaluate, and sustain, an evidence-based user- friendly smart phrase embedded into the emr to improve remote symptom management by cuing telephone triage nurses' assessments in a comprehensive cancer institute.

Background/significance: Managing cancer symptoms is challenging for frontline tele-triage nurses to get patients to the most appropriate levels of care. Earliest descriptive studies indicate that toggling multiple emr screens to assess toxicity risk while providing emotional support over the phone to vulnerable patients may cause missed communications, error, and dissatisfaction. Smart phrase technology to improve symptom management is not widely used nor outcome tested. This study aims to test a tele-smart phrase-emr interface to improve nurse-sensitive patient outcomes and nurse satisfaction.

Methods: Repeated-measures design will compare nurse-sensitive quality variables along a 5-point pre/post implementation trajectory in a multi-site cancer institute serving 14,000 patients. Outcome data from outpatient oncology satisfaction surveys include: managing chemotherapy side effects, education for fatigue management, appetite loss, and emotional needs met, home-based education, pain control, and perceived safety/security. LifeChat epic databases will measure nurse-sensitive changes in er visits and appointments within 24 hours. 375 tele-triaged calls at each of 5 data-collection points will be analyzed using generalized linear mixed models to construct hierarchical regressions to model outcomes. Changes in nurse satisfaction and usability will also be tested.

Conclusions/implications: Integrating smart phrase tele-emr-interface well-embedded in practice, documented in the emr, highly reliable, & widely disseminated holds promise for improving assessment to reduce treatment toxicity risk, optimize symptom management, and quantify the impact of patient engagement on quality/safety.

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