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Progress Notes

This has been a very busy fall for ECU Physicians, and the holidays are just around the corner. As I write this column, over Thanksgiving weekend, I am struck by how very much we all have to be thankful for.

We can be thankful for the loyalty and energy of the hundreds of people that make up ECU Physicians. Each of our providers, clinical staff, patient access workers, financial experts, and administrative team prove their commitment and enthusiasm each day. You understand the importance of putting our Patients First, demonstrating to them that every visit is important to us and that we are grateful they have chosen us for their care.

We can be thankful for the work of the QIDT (Quality Improvement Development Team). Dr. Ernie Larkin has led this team, which included Ms. Jody Cook, Ms. Martha Dartt, Ms. Carolyn Erwin and Dr. Lars Larsen. They completed their report on the current status of quality improvement efforts in our different settings and presented it to the ECU Physicians Board in October. The Board expressed great interest in the recommendations. Therefore, QIDT has been working on a draft charge for a new quality oversight committee and I have been developing a position description for a new Director of Quality Programs.

We can be thankful for the work of Martha Dartt, RN, MSN, Interim Director of Nursing Services. Martha has taken on this role with her usual professionalism, passion and careful attention to detail. In the meantime, a team consisting of Ms. Carolyn Erwin, Ms. Janice Paris, and Ms. Karen Allen completed the process of redrafting the Director of Nursing Services position description, which was approved by the ECU Physicians Board. That description is now being reviewed by the Department of Human Resources' Classification and Compensation team, so we can finalize it and begin advertising for a permanent Director.

We can be thankful for the customer service excellence training that was done at the Greenville Convention Center at the end of September, with participation of over 730 of our employees. Ms. Beth Keane of the Studer Group provided all of us who attended with additional tools for working with patients and each other. An adaptation of the training has been integrated into our New Employee Orientation sessions. I see this training as a first step. We will need to find the right way to provide this training to all members of the ECU Physicians team in the future.

Finally, we can be thankful for the patients that entrust their healthcare to us. They know that each of you want to provide them with the best care possible. They respect the contribution that each of you make. I appreciate all that you do for them. I am thankful each of you is part of our team.

*Nicholas Benson, MD, MBA
Acting Medical Director, ECU Physicians
Vice Dean*

Month-At-A-Glance

MONTH-LONG OBSERVANCES

November:

Adoption
Alzheimer's Disease Awareness
COPD Awareness
Diabetes
Diabetic Eye Disease
Epilepsy Awareness
Flu and Pneumonia
Great American Smokeout
Hospice
Jaw and Joints Awareness
Lung Cancer Awareness
Marrow Awareness
Pancreatic Cancer Awareness
Pulmonary Hypertension Awareness

December:

Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention
Safe Toys & Gifts



WEEK-LONG OBSERVANCES

November:

4 - 10 Allied Health
4 - 10 Health Information & Technology
4 - 10 Radiologic Technology
18 - 24 GERD Awareness

December:

1 - 7 Aplastic Anemia Awareness
2 - 9 Hand Washing Awareness

RECOGNITION DAYS/EVENTS:

November:

20 - Prematurity Awareness

December:

1 - World AIDS



Health Information System/Services Update

The staff in our department is busy working on HealthSpan (Epic) training and certification for the EpicCare Ambulatory module. This is the module that will replace Centricity (Logician) for ECU Physicians. Many of us have been to Madison, Wisconsin for multiple training classes and have completed projects and taken exams for certification. This certification will prove its worth in Epic's Good Install Program.

I would like to acknowledge the ambulatory team:

Mary Thompson, Project lead
 Jay Davis, Application Coordinator
 Lennon Scott, Application Coordinator
 Tracy Carawan, Principal Trainer
 Nan-Et Charles
 Roy Newton
 Joanne Tyson
 Karen Watson
 Marie Lewis, PAS Representative
 Martha Dartt, Nurse Lead
 Donna Boykin, Nursing Representative



The Physician team for ECU Physicians is as follows:

Dr. Clyde Brooks, Lead Physician
 Dr. Claudia Goettler, Surgery
 Dr. Johnathan Firnhaber, Family Medicine
 Dr. Keith Nelson, Obstetrics and Gynecology
 Dr. John Olsson, Pediatrics
 Dr. Nadiesda Costa, Internal Medicine
 Dr. Tom Clay, Psychiatry

I would like to ask for patient understanding from all clinics in regards to requests for changes to Centricity. Our entire staff is involved in some way with the HealthSpan conversion and is limited in their time to provide new functionality within Centricity.

HealthSpan Update - Patient Access Services

Since our HealthSpan kickoff meeting, project team members from PCMH; ECU Physicians; and the EPIC Team have been working diligently to establish timelines and identify key business functions for the revenue cycle applications install.

Patients Access core team members who will work on the different applications for HealthSpan are as follows:

Prelude/Registration

Linda Sawyer
 Sheila Walker
 Jodi Florio-Burnette
 Cathy Wilson
 Betty Ridenhour
 Susan Albritton

Cadence/Scheduling

Tammy Holloman
 Hilda McLawhorn
 Pam Wingate
 Sandy Mooring
 Victoria Mayo

Reporting

Rose Rowe



Please contact them if you have questions related to the project.

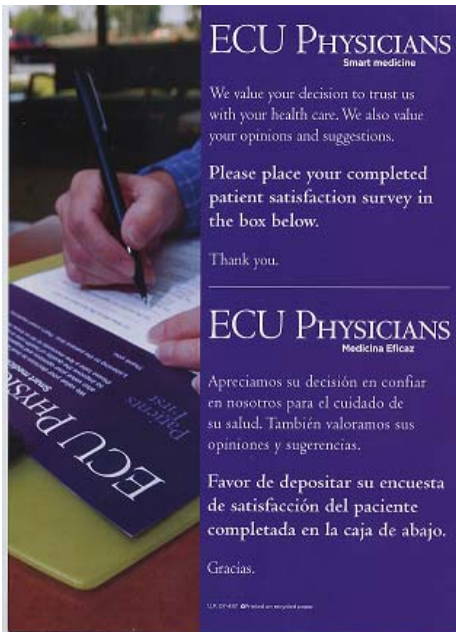
The Prelude and Cadence Core Teams have attended training classes at Epic University in Madison, WI. After training, they successfully completed their required projects and are now working toward certification. Super users from each clinical location have been identified and assigned to the above applications according to their expertise. They along with the core project team are in the process of completing detailed workflows to submit to the Epic team. These workflows will be the foundations for building our processes within HealthSpan.

The Core Project Teams from ECU Physicians and PCMH are also having weekly conference call meetings with the Epic Teams. These calls facilitate communications regarding staff roles within the clinical areas and the hospital and support the core teams with the project deadlines which must be met for good install.

Congratulations to these team members and thanks for the time and effort each of you are putting in this project!

ECU Physicians

Patient First - Patient Satisfaction Survey



“Patients First,” is an initiative launched by the ECU Physicians Board to improve patient access to our clinics, improve our facilities and the way we operate the clinics, and most importantly, ensure that we remain committed to the highest quality of care and superior customer service. The new patient satisfaction survey, which will be distributed in all of our ECU Physician’s clinics, is a part of this initiative.

The new survey was designed by a committee of departmental administrators and representatives from Group Practice Administration and Patient Access Services to help ensure that we are providing high quality service to our patients by better understanding their expectations and needs and how well our organization is satisfying these expectations. There will be three phases to this survey program. In mid November, we will begin distributing surveys to patients in all of our clinical areas. Patients will be given a survey on-site and drop in the survey box in the waiting area or take it home and mail the survey back using the business reply address with no postage necessary.

During the second phase of this program we will mail surveys to a random sample of our patient population. We will also continue to distribute surveys in the clinics but narrow our audience to only include new patients. All new patients will be given a survey to complete at the end of their visit. They will have the opportunity to complete the survey on-site or take it home and mail the survey back.

During the third phase of this program we will be implementing an on-line survey. A link will be placed on the ECU Physicians website for patients to complete the survey electronically. In addition, we will email patients and ECU employees for their feedback on their experiences with ECU Physicians. We will also continue to distribute surveys in the clinics to new patients.

We are looking to all employees to help ensure that we are putting our patients and their needs first all of the time, every time.

If you have questions about the Patient Satisfaction Surveys please contact Amanda Turner and the BSOM Office of Staff Development at 744-1925 or turnera@ecu.edu.

Contact Center News

ECU Physicians Customer Care Line (744-CARE)

On November 16th, the Customer Care Line was activated as part of the new Patients First Patient Satisfaction Survey process at ECU Physicians. The 744-CARE line is one of multiple channels that patients can use to provide feedback regarding their experience at ECU Physicians.

The Contact Center staff is tasked with the responsibility for answering the 744-CARE line, processing the feedback information, and providing our patient callers with assurance that their respective feedback will be handled with the appropriate level of timeliness and diligence. Once the information is received, the Contact Center staff will input and route it using the newly established Patient Feedback Form on OneStop.

The 744-CARE line also provides a venue for our Spanish speaking callers to provide feedback on their experiences at ECU Physicians. Calls from Spanish speaking patients will be processed and translated by our Spanish Interpreter staff. Once the information is translated into English, the interpreters will input and route the information using the Patient Feedback Form in OneStop.

If you would like to know more about the 744-CARE line and Patient Feedback Form processes, please contact either Mary Schiller or Rick Yakubowski at 744-1020.

Language and Interpreter Services

A reminder regarding American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters

Many of you are aware that we do not have ASL interpreters on staff at ECU Physicians and that we contract these interpreters on a by patient appointment basis. ASL interpreters are an extremely finite resource throughout the state and they are hired to provide sign interpretation in a variety of settings. The interpreters we regularly hire to support our patient appointments are also hired to provide sign interpretation for hearing impaired students at ECU and activities within the community at large. As such, there are times when we cannot provide an ASL interpreter to support a patient visit, because the interpreters are committed elsewhere. The process that we currently have in place works very well and we effectively support the vast majority of patient visits that require an interpreter. Same day appointments and appointments within the same business week can present quite a challenge, so we ask you for continued assistance in contacting us as soon as possible upon the scheduling of an appointment that requires an ASL interpreter.

If you have any question regarding the scheduling of ASL interpreters, please contact Lynn Gammell, Language Access and Interpreter Services Coordinator, at 744-9030.

Prescribing Guidelines

Providers and Clinical Staff are reminded and cautioned that:

- NO provider may write prescriptions for a patient that has not been medically evaluated.
- All prescribing activity must be documented in the electronic medical record.
- NO provider should write prescriptions for themselves or family members, except in the case of acute, minor illness or medical emergency.
- NO clinical staff should phone in or authorize prescriptions without the express authority of the provider, and such authorization should be documented in the EMR. Failure to follow this rule of law may result in dismissal from the university and/or criminal prosecution.
- Providers may designate representatives to phone in or authorize prescriptions but are encouraged to limit this to skilled clinical staff, preferably RNs and LPNs.
- Pharmacists both a ECU and at private pharmacies have the right and the responsibility to refuse to fill prescriptions that they feel are in violation of any of these standards.

Please note that these reminders are intended to assist our clinicians in providing our patient with the highest quality of patient care and are based, in part, on the established policies of the North Carolina Medical Board and the *Professional Practice Guidelines and Expectations* of the Brody School of Medicine.

Any questions regarding these guideline should be directed to Dr. Nicholas Benson, Acting Medical Director.

Christmas Tidbits

“*Christmas is Coming*” is a nursery rhyme and Christmas carol frequently sung as a round with lyrics as follows:

*Christmas is coming, the goose is getting fat
Please put a penny in the old man's hat
If you haven't got a penny, a **ha'penny** will do
If you haven't got a ha'penny, a **farthing** will do
If you haven't got a farthing, then God bless you!*

Definitions:

ha'penny - The British halfpenny coin was worth 1/480th of a pound sterling. In its 700 year history it was made from silver but as the value of the pound declined, the coin was made from base metals. It was finally abandoned in 1969 as part of the process of decimalising the British currency. Halfpenny was pronounced “hayp-nee”.

farthing - is an old word meaning a fourth or a quarter. In modern usage it could be referred to as an old British coin valued one quarter of a penny.



Send newsletter submissions to:

Beverly DeWitt
Group Practice Administration
Brody 1K-20
Phone: (252) 744-2322
Fax: (252) 744-3447

View on-line @ www.ecu.edu/grouppractice

Deck the Halls



Carolyn Octigan is a Patient Relations Representative in the Brody Outpatient Center with some not so hidden talents. Her creativity began when she learned to tie bows for Christmas wreaths and she hasn't stopped since that time. Carolyn graciously agreed to help ECU Physicians improve our holiday decorations by making wreaths for the Brody Outpatient Center, Pharmacy Services and the Moye Medical Center. She has also assisted with the

selection of the trees and decorations for a variety of the outpatient clinics and updated many of our existing decorations.

Carolyn has worked in Patient Access Services, assigned to the Brody Outpatient Center for the last four years. She worked one year at the Thomas Professional Building with Billing and Reimbursement. Prior to joining ECU Physicians, Carolyn, worked for Proctor and Gamble. She's married to Bill, and they have three children, four grandchildren and one grandchild on the way.

Word to the Wise

The future is not a result of choices among alternative paths offered by the present, but a place that is created. Created first in the mind and will, created next in activity. The future is to some place we are going to, but one we are creating. The paths are not to be found, but made, and the activity of making them, changes both the maker and the destination.

---John Schaar