Improving Advance Care Planning in New Cancer Patients

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BACKGROUND

- Advance Care Planning (ACP) aligns medical care with a patient's life goals, personal values, and preferences resulting in improved patient outcomes
- Guidelines for new cancer patients recommend providers discuss and document ACP by the third office visit
- Adherence rate to ACP guidelines are 3.2% at MDA UTMB
- Contributing factors for low adherence rates include: 1) Need for provider training on standardized ACP conversations, 2) Need for conversation guide appropriate to the ambulatory setting, and 3) Need for standardized method of documenting ACP conversations

AIM

By December 6, 2021, 30% of MDA UTMB oncology providers will document in the electronic health record (EHR) that a conversation regarding ACP took place by the third office visit for all new cancer patients.

METHODOLOGY

- Expand ACP project to other MDA UTMB departments
- Make SmartPhrase part of the providers charting templates
- Adopt MDA ACP policy at MDA UTMB
- Data revealed provider adherence to ACP guidelines improved from 3.2% to 34%
- Provider use of the SmartPhrase exceeded ACP adherence rates resulting in 36%
- Used a conversation guide to standardize the ACP conversation
- Created a SmartPhrase to standardize documentation of ACP in the EHR
- Implemented September 13, 2021, to December 6, 2021, and collected data weekly for twelve-weeks

RESULTS

- Allot extra time in clinic for ACP conversations
- Make ACP an internal quality metric
- Utilize the train-the-trainer model for ACP training

CONCLUSIONS

- Increasing adherence to ACP guidelines was needed to improve the practice gap at MDA UTMB
- Results indicated that adherence rates improved from 3.2% to 34%
- Provider attendance rates were affected by external factors
- The success of the project was attributed to team collaboration, the PDSA methodology, and stakeholder support

NEXT STEPS

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METHODOLOGY

- 255 cancer patient's charts were audited during a twelve-week period
- A conversation guide was used to standardize the ACP conversation
- A SmartPhrase was created to standardize ACP documentation in the EHR
- A 10-minute education session took place for providers and data was reviewed at the monthly provider meetings
- Reports were built in EHR to track the documented ACP conversations

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