Impact of Telephone Reminders Prior to Appointments to Reduce the Number of “No-Show” Rates

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Background
Patient no-shows for scheduled primary care appointments are common. No-shows of patients to their scheduled appointments have a significant impact on healthcare systems, including lower clinical efficiency, unused appointment slots, reduce patient quality of care, and loss of revenue. Various factors influence no-show rates, such as gender, age, service quality, number of preceding appointments, lack of information about the reason for the appointment and prolonged wait times. No-show rates were reported from 12% to 80% in various healthcare settings. An estimated 67,000 no-shows can cost healthcare system approximately $7 million dollars. Reduction in no-show rates reported from 20.99% to 7.07% with the use of telephone reminders.

Method
513 patients scheduled for a benign hematology consult from March to May 2022 received a telephone call prior to their scheduled appointments as a reminder and to provide the rationale for the consult. A retrospective chart review was also done to assess the number of no-shows in the benign hematology clinic from March to May 2021, to examine the difference in no-show rates pre and post telephone reminder calls.

Conclusion
▪ Telephone reminders prior to scheduled appointments are feasible.
▪ Positive impact of telephone reminders on decreasing “no show” rates.
▪ Decrease in “no show” rates equates to decrease in loss of revenue.

Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No-Shows</th>
<th>Scheduled</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>513</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lost Revenue due to no shows

- 2022 (No Shows- March -May): $5,860.00
- 2021 (No Shows- March- May): $13,771.00

Aim
Primary aim
Explore the feasibility of a reminder telephone call prior to a scheduled appointment.

Secondary aim
▪ Examine the number of “no-show” rates for appointments pre and post reminder calls.
▪ Impact of reminder telephone calls in reducing “no-show” rates.
▪ Revenue saved with reduction in “no-show” rates.