

Compassionate Listeners

Volunteers' Crucial Role in Patient Follow-up

Presenter



Beth Daddario, CAVS
Director of Volunteer Experience
Inspira Health

Objectives

- Share the history of the program
- Share the lessons learned over the 4+ years
- Discuss the Partners in the Process
- Discuss some of the feedback that has been beneficial

History

- Started in 2020 with a goal to learn information on the discharge process
- Started with a couple of volunteers during COVID
- Once focus of questions was identified, met with PFAC for feedback
- Initial partners
 - Volunteers
 - Director Patient Relations
 - Director Case Management
 - IS to run the discharge report

Tools Needed

- Dedicated quiet space
- Hospital email
- Access to Teams
- Accurate report of calls
- Worksheet with questions for volunteers to note the comments
- Scripted questions focusing on the information needed
- Scripted message for unsuccessful calls – no answer
- Option for translating to other languages

Lessons Learned

- Discharge list needs to be checked within 24 hours
- Enough volunteers to keep calls within 10 – 18 days of discharge
- Dedicated line to make calls – with a quiet space for volunteers to fully listen to the patients and families

Lessons Learned

- Staff need to respond to FYIs and referrals in a timely manner
- Praises are as important to share as the opportunities for improvement
- Volunteers should not call patients they know
- This program is not for all volunteers
- Beneficial to listen in during the first couple months to be sure volunteers are following the script

Benefits of Volunteers Placing Calls

- Compassionate
- Ability to focus on conversation
- True Listener
- Patients hear the sincerity in their voice
- No bias when staff are mentioned

Volunteer Qualities

- Basic computer skills
- Great listener
- Willing to follow scripting
- Full understanding and commitment to patient confidentiality
- Ability to restrain from providing advice
- Ability to capture and share information accurately
- Understanding that the ultimate goal is to help improve care

Volunteer – Donna Levick



“Patients appreciate our interest in the quality of their in-patient experience.”

Teamwork – Departments Supporting the Initiative

Original Partner

Volunteers

IS (Information Systems)

Patient Relations

Care Coordination

Nurse Managers

PFAC (Patient Family Advisory Council)

New Partners

Foundation

Interpreting – Translation System

Organizational Consultants

Physician Research Team

Ancillary Departments

Current Worksheet for Volunteers



Patient Engagement Follow Up Calls

Date: _____

Call Completed by: _____

ECD # _____ (Age) _____

Patient Name/Contact Number: _____

Inspira Location/Length of Stay: _____

***Volunteers help to prepare the reports

Current Worksheet for Volunteers



Patient Engagement Follow Up Calls

Date: _____

Call Completed by: _____

ECD #: _____ (Age) _____

Patient Name/Contact Number: _____

Inspira Location/Length of Stay: _____

***Volunteers help to prepare the reports

How Calls are Calculated

Tracking Information	Yes	No
Call Completed		
Referral for Follow-Up		

Readmitted_____

How the Call Starts

Introductory

Hi, my names is (first name only) _____ and I am a volunteer with Inspira Health, may I speak with _____, if they are available. First, on behalf of the team at Inspira, let me thank you for coming to Inspira for your healthcare needs. We are making a courtesy call to get your feedback on your recent visit at _____. It's our goal to provide high quality health services to our patients and I would really appreciate a couple of minutes of your time to answer 3 brief questions.....

Question 1

Here at Inspira, our goal is to work together as a Team to meet your needs. Based on your recent inpatient admission, did you feel we all worked together throughout your entire stay? This team would include everyone wearing an Inspira badge.

- If yes, great!
- If no, can you provide additional information?

Question 2

Now that you are home, do you feel we prepared you to take care of yourself? *Or your loved one?*

Question 3 Added

Did staff use VOYCE Translation during your hospital stay to ensure your questions were translated properly? Any feedback regarding translation assistance?

Final Question – The Heart of the Program



Do you have any additional feedback you would like to provide?

Closing the Call

- It is possible that you may receive a survey either by email, regular mail or text. It is important for us to have as many surveys completed and returned as possible. Your survey completion provides valuable feedback to improving care. Please help us by sending it in.
- Volunteers apologize if we didn't meet the expectations and stress the importance of completing the survey
- (If questioned why the patient might not receive a survey – please respond with “the surveys are randomly sent through the vendor for complete fairness in data collection.”)
- Our goal is to ALWAYS exceed your expectations – thank you for your time and Thank You for choosing Inspira.
- Please be well and stay safe – again, thank you for your time.

Volunteer – Rosanne Cervone



“A volunteer is in a position to advocate for a patient's concerns when the patient doesn't know where to turn. It is rewarding to reach out and get a patient to the person who could help him/her.”

Voice Mail Message the Call

- This is a message for _____ I am a volunteer from Inspira Health making a courtesy call regarding a recent visit to our Vineland campus. If you would like to have a volunteer call again, please call 856-641-6131 and leave a message with your name and contact number. We will arrange to have a volunteer return your call at their earliest convenience.
- Many of the returned calls are to share positive experiences.
- Patient Relations has a dedicated line for voice messages. They forward any return calls to us.

Daily Report of Calls

Report Date _____

Date Calls Made _____

Calls completed by _____

Total Calls _____

Completed _____

No Answer/Wrong Number _____

Answered Unwilling/able to talk _____

Utilized VOYCE to complete _____

Excel Grid to Track Information

ECDNo	MRN	Pt Name	Pt Age	Disposition	Phone No1	LOS	Ins	Room	Facility	Dx	ClinSvc	Expired	Report Date	Date of call	Call Completed	Q1	Q2	Q3 (Recommend)	Comments	Referred
			42	Routine		2					MED	#N/A	#####		No				left message	
			34	Routine		2					MED	#N/A	#####		No				wrong number	

The columns in peach are entered from the IS report.

There is a formula used to update the expired patients daily.

The report date is the day following discharge – the date the report is received.

The volunteers complete all columns in green starting with Date of Call.

Color Coding – end of the month

Highlighted Color Code:

Green – Positive Comments with staff or units mentioned

I have my survey to fill out. I don't usually do them, but I was so happy with my care. They were on top of everything. They treated me “like a queen.”

Staff was very respectful and nonjudgmental. He felt that he didn't deserve their respect.

All staff very courteous, everyone. I even had a volunteer come up and visit me. It was very nice.

I did the survey, these calls are very helpful, thanks for calling, I was treated well during my stay

Color Coding – End of the Month

Light Red – Referred for follow-up

The patient reported that one of the night time nurses failed to bring her the prescribed medicine. She spoke to the nursing supervisor about the problem.

Patient could have used more information from the cardiac doctor when she was discharged. Patient has prescriptions issued from Inspira. She wants to know how she will refill these prescriptions. Would like a call back. Rec'd email survey but has not returned it yet.

Yellow – Concerns shared – refused follow up

Overall good stay, nurses took good care of me, I did fill out the survey and returned it, only concern I had was I have asthma and COPD and I had a lot of issues with nurses, doctors wearing perfume and after shave, at one point I had to ask a nurse to leave the room, it was overpowering, I don't think they should wear perfume, also several times we had snafu's with the computer and my records, I put all that in the survey that I returned

Color Coding – End of the Month

Blue – Mixed reviews – refused follow up

Patient felt the care was "a little disjointed" - different doctor each time, uncertain diagnoses, didn't feel like he "was in the loop". Thought nurses were excellent.

Did not like being in ED hallway for 9 hours. Once I got out of surgery , everything was good, 100%. I have my own restaurant , tell your food service they are super excellent, could have not been any better and I understand food service.

Conversation with the patient's daughter. The daughter felt that the nurse on duty should check-in with the patient before going off shift. She had asked a question about the MRI results for her father; the nurse never returned with an answer to the question. She did comment that the ER nurse was amazing. The daughter has included that praise on the written survey she completed and returned. As a whole, the experience went well.

Color Coding Sample



MRN	PtName	PtAge	Dispostio n	PhoneNo1	L O S	Prim Pyr	Loc	Locl D	EncReason	ClinS vc	Expired Patients	Report Date	Date of call	Call Comp leted	Q1 (Tea mw ork)	Q2 (D/C Prep)	Additional Feedback	Department referred & date
████	(Name)	84	Routine	████	2	Aetna	████	RMC	████████████████	SUR	#N/A	████	7/24/ 2024	yes	yes	yes	I am a Mullica Hill guy. That said my experience in Vineland was great, very impressed with staff . When it comes to surveys, I think live phone calls are the best way to go. The ones that ask you to fill in blocks are terrible. Just my experience.	FYI to Febe - WOW

Color Coding Summation

- Opportunities are in the Yellow and Blue
 - The goal is to address these comments to transition to a green comment.
- Working on the Red
 - This feedback is a gift – if they share the information, we know what to work on moving forward.
- Staff need to hear the Green
 - Sharing gratitude is important to reinforce the impact our staff has on the experiences of our patients and their families.

Volunteer – Andria Balicki

“The ability to elevate concerns discussed in Patient Experience calls improves future outcomes and allows the patient to be heard in a nonjudgmental way. Additionally, we are able to pass along a lot of gratitude and positive feedback.”



Vineland 2024 Totals

Patient Call Back

FY 2024	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Total Calls	683	658	673	622	622	664	675	675	599	701	642	581	7795
Minus Readmits	69	64	93	92	92	103	104	113	71	60	63	36	960
Total	614	594	580	530	530	561	571	562	528	641	579	545	6835
Calls Completed	239	233	250	188	216	169	186	199	209	234	225	191	2539
%	39%	39%	43%	35%	41%	30%	33%	35%	40%	37%	39%	35%	37%

Vineland 2025 Totals

Patient Call Back

FY 2025	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Total Calls	524	616	638	704	669	654							3805
Minus Readmits	53	101	129	127	116	111							637
Total	471	515	509	577	553	543							3168
Calls Completed	187	173	143	177	176	171							1027
%	40%	34%	28%	31%	32%	31%							32.42%

Elmer 2024 Totals

Patient Call Back FY 2024

FY 2024	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Total Calls	119	92	110	92	107	107	96	78	91	0	0	0	892
Minus Readmits	11	10	15	15	13	13	17	9	14	0	0	0	117
Total	108	82	95	77	94	94	79	69	77	0	0	0	775
Calls Completed	47	41	34	29	40	40	25	28	30	0	0	0	314
%	44%	50%	36%	38%	43%	43%	32%	41%	39%	0%	0%	0%	41%

Elmer 2025 Totals

Patient Call Back													
FY 2025	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Total Calls	55	105	83	68	98	87							496
Minus Readmits	3	17	18	18	15	15							86
Total	52	88	65	50	83	72							410
Calls Completed	24	25	16	16	28	20							129
%	46%	28%	25%	32%	34%	28.00%							31.46%

Mullica Hill 2024 Totals

Patient Call Back FY 2024

FY 2024	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Total Calls	729	644	661	658	695	740	681	676	648	731	713	680	8256
Minus Readmits	152	88	57	46	112	144	119	172	128	190	188	148	1544
Total	577	556	604	612	583	596	562	504	520	541	525	532	6712
Calls Completed	205	237	253	245	223	206	174	189	169	179	172	168	2420
%	36%	43%	42%	40%	38%	35%	31%	38%	33%	33%	33%	32%	36%

Mullica Hill 2025 Totals

Patient Call Back

FY 2025	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Total Calls	575	622	649	677	733	651							3907
Minus Readmits	95	108	128	132	165	127							755
Total	480	514	521	545	568	524							3152
Calls Completed	169	187	116	217	238	188							1115
%	35%	36%	22%	40%	42%	36%							35.37%

Positive Outcomes

- 33% - 43% of the calls are completed in Vineland and 32% - 50% of the calls in Elmer – compared to normal survey responses which range from 20% - 30%
- Opportunities for improvement are captured and forwarded directly with the appropriate team via the Director of Patient Relations
- Sharing the positive comments is just as important as the opportunities
- Patients who didn't have a clear understanding of needs at discharge are provided an opportunity to receive a call back for clarification

Positive Outcomes

- Patients are encouraged to complete the official survey regardless of their response which validates the sincerity of the call
- Patients who have been waiting for follow up now have contact information
- Questions to patients can be connected to goals and/or projects of the organization
 - Example – Pharmacy project and ability to track Rx concerns

True Benefits of the Program

- Patients understand we care enough to call back for feedback
- It is the right thing to do
- Focus on
 - Engagement by having volunteers truly listen during the call
 - Loyalty by encouraging patients to share as our goal is continual improvement
 - Safety by immediately forwarding concerns to the appropriate staff – medications needed, home care not started, referrals to the ED, etc.

Volunteer – Carol Feneli



“I feel the courtesy calls I make have a real, positive effect on the patients we reach - whether they have had a good or bad experience!”

Thank You!

Appreciate your time in allowing me to share my program.

Beth Daddario, CAVS

Director of Volunteer Experience

Inspira Health

daddariob@ihn.org

(856) 641-7737