IN-HOME QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

BEST PRACTICE:
Telemonitoring

NURSE TRACK

Best Practice Intervention Packages were designed for use by any In-Home Provider Agency to support reducing avoidable hospitalizations and emergency room visits. Any In-Home care nurse/clinician can use these educational materials.

Best Practice Intervention Packages were designed to educate and create awareness of strategies and interventions to reduce avoidable hospitalizations and unnecessary emergency room visits.

Nurse Track

This best practice intervention package is designed to educate and reinforce to nurses the value of telemonitoring in reducing avoidable acute care hospitalizations.

Objectives

After completing the activities included in the Nurse Track of this Best Practice Intervention Package, *Telemonitoring*, the learner will be able to:

1. Define telemonitoring and how this intervention can be used effectively by a home health agency
2. Describe how telemonitoring may reduce avoidable acute care hospitalizations
3. Describe two nursing actions or applications that support telemonitoring

Complete the following activities:
- Read the "Nurse's Guide to Practical Application
- Review the Telemonitoring Checklist for Nurses
- Complete the Nursing Post Test

Disclaimer: Some of the information contained within this Best Practice Intervention Package may be more directed and intended for an acute care setting, or a higher level of care or skilled level of care setting such as those involved in Medicare. The practices, interventions and information contained are valuable resources to assist you in your knowledge and learning.

Disclaimer: All forms included are optional forms; each can be used as Tools, Templates or Guides for your agency and as you choose. Your individual agency can design or draft these forms to be specific to your own agency's needs and setting.

Nurse's Guide to Practical Application
Telemonitoring

Purpose: To assist the nurse with attaining the maximum potential for using telemonitoring as an intervention to support reducing avoidable hospitalizations.

Definition: Telemonitoring includes the collection of clinical data and the transmission of such data between a patient at a distant location and a health care provider through electronic information processing technologies. The provider conducts a clinical review of the transferred data and provides a response relating to such data (Home Telehealth Reference 2005).

> **Simply stated:**
> **Telemonitoring** is the **remote care** delivery between a patient in his or her place of residence and a health care professional **using electronic technology**.

Telemonitoring technologies may include:
- Remote monitoring, including pulse oximetry, vital signs, EKG, weight and blood glucose
- Messaging
- Video transmission, such as a demonstration of a new procedure or a digital image of a wound

Practical Application:
- Identify patients that will benefit from telemonitoring; use the hospitalization risk assessment **and** clinical judgment

- Consider patient/caregiver abilities for telemonitoring including acceptance of the telemonitor, ability to self-monitor and to safely connect to and utilize a telemonitoring unit

- Assess the patient's home; most homes can be adapted to telemonitoring equipment and may only require minor revisions to ensure safe and successful remote care delivery

- Include patient/caregiver in a developing schedule for transmission of telemonitoring data

- Educate patient/caregiver:
  - Purpose of telemonitoring
  - A telemonitor is not an emergency response system
  - Patient/caregiver responsibilities
  - Equipment safety

- Notify the physician, family and all involved staff of the discontinuation of the telemonitoring program. Patients can be discharged from the program at their own request, by physician order or by the determination of the field staff and managers.

- **You are the best marketer for promoting telemonitoring.**
  Be positive! Share successes!

Telemonitoring Checklist for Nurses

Telemonitoring includes the collection of clinical data and the transmission of such data between a patient at a distant location and a health care provider through electronic information processing technologies. The provider conducts a clinical review of the transferred data and provides a response relating to such data.

Telemonitoring Checklist

Patient selection criteria
- o **Accept use of telemonitor**
- o **Able to self-monitor**
- o **Able to read and safely connect to telemonitor**

Confidentiality
- o **Receive data and follow-up in private area**

Scheduling
- o **Schedule and track encounters**
- o **Include patient in scheduling data transmission times**

Documentation
- o **Always document!**
- o **Use agency approved form**

Patient Education
- o **Why telemonitoring**
- o **Call schedule**
- o **Phone safety**
- o **Self-monitoring**
- o **Not an emergency response system**

Telemonitoring = Reducing Avoidable Hospitalizations

- o **Increases symptom surveillance**

- o **Improves patient self-management**

- o **Detects early changes in health status**

- o **Provides real-time data to the physician**

- o **Offers better communication with patients at high risk for hospitalization**

- o **Enables patients to learn more about managing their acute/chronic condition**

- o **Prompts patient to seek earlier medical attention**

NURSING POST TEST
Telemonitoring

Directions: Choose the ONE BEST response to the following questions. Circle the answer that identifies the ONE BEST response.

1. Telemonitoring includes all of the following **except**:

   A. Clinical data collection
   B. Data transmission between patient at a distant location and a health care provider through electronic information processing technologies
   C. Patient self-monitors blood glucose and records results into a daily log that are reported to the nurse on the next visit
   D. Provider conducts a clinical review of the transferred data and interprets the finding

2. Most home care patients could qualify as a candidate for telemonitoring. Structured, effective screening should be done to identify those patients who would benefit most from telemonitoring. Several key areas to assess are: the acceptance of telemonitoring; ability to perform self-monitoring activities; and ability to read, safely connect and utilize a telemonitoring unit.

   A. True
   B. False

3. The following is a list of factors that will assist with identification or prioritizing patients for telemonitoring **except**:

   A. Hospitalization risk assessment
   B. High-risk diagnosis
   C. Frequent hospitalizations
   D. New or multiple medications
   E. Patient/caregiver must have computer skills

4. Telemonitoring can positively affect a patient's status by all of the following **except**:

   A. Assisting nurses with early detection of changes in clinical status, resulting in early interventions
   B. Eliminating physician visits
   C. Assisting with reducing avoidable acute care hospitalization and keeping patients at home
   D. Increasing patient/caregiver active participation in own health care

5. Patient education should include the following:

   a. Purpose of telemonitoring
   b. Telemonitoring is not to be used as an emergency response system
   c. Specific patient/caregiver responsibilities
   d. Equipment safety, care and use of equipment including cleaning
   e. All of the above

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