

Session/Poster#

Presenter

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Patient Portal Use After Activation during the Birth Hospitalization

Background: Studies show patient portal access increases medication adherence and improves primary care follow-up. At our institution, a quality improvement (QI) initiative to standardize patient portal activation in the nursery improved activation rates to almost 90%.

Aim: To describe the facilitators and barriers to patient portal use by mothers of infants discharged from an urban safety net hospital well-baby nursery.

Methods: As part of ongoing QI efforts to improve patient portal activation and use, the study team conducted phone interviews with a convenience sample of mothers of infants discharged from the nursery between August 2021 and January 2022. Participants with active patient portals were randomly selected through a shuffle system and were administered an open-ended phone interview. Mothers were categorized as “users” if they reported using the portal at least once and “non-users” if they never accessed the portal. Sociodemographic and patient outcome (emergency department (ED) visits, hospitalizations, appointment no-shows) variables were compared between the two groups.

Results: Of the 482 mothers with active patient portals at nursery discharge, 127 (26.3%) were interviewed.

Sociodemographic variables did not differ between portal users and non-users. Most mothers (70%, 89/127) reported using the portal at least once and 85.4% (76/89) of users found it useful. The most common reasons for portal use were to check appointments and test results. Among non-users, the most common reason for not using the portal was a lack of knowledge (42.1%). Portal users were less likely to have a no-show compared to non-users (44.9% vs. 78.9%, $P < 0.001$). Hospitalizations and ED visits did not differ between the two groups.

Conclusion: Most mothers reported accessing the portal and finding it useful. To address the lack of knowledge as a barrier to portal use, future interventions will focus on improving how mothers are taught about the portals in the nursery.