

Improving Depression Remission at a Federally Qualified Health Center: A Plan-Do-Study-Act Quality Improvement Project

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BACKGROUND

With an estimated prevalence of 7.1% among US adults, major depressive disorder (MDD) is one of the most common psychiatric illnesses in the nation. The US Preventative Services Task Force recommends depression screening for all adults in the general population. The goal of MDD treatment is full remission, which is defined as patient health questionnaire-9 (PHQ-9) scores < 5.

In 2020, the clinic saw 46,166 patients. The patient population included 60% of individuals who lived at or below the federal poverty level; 77% who were members of racial-ethnic minority groups, primarily Hispanic or Latino; and 51% uninsured individuals.

OBJECTIVE

The primary aim of this quality improvement project was to improve the rate of depression screening, and depression remission rate, at OneWorld FQHC in Omaha, NE.

METHODS

A multidisciplinary workgroup implemented interventions to improve and obtain updated PHQ-9 scores among adult patients throughout 2021.

Interventions:

- The Information Technology Department updated the electronic health record system to increase PHQ-9 reminders for eligible patients
- Therapists contacted patients (English and Spanish) to perform PHQ-9 screenings and encourage recommended treatment.
- The psychiatric team communicated treatment recommendations to primary care providers prior to the patient's scheduled office visit

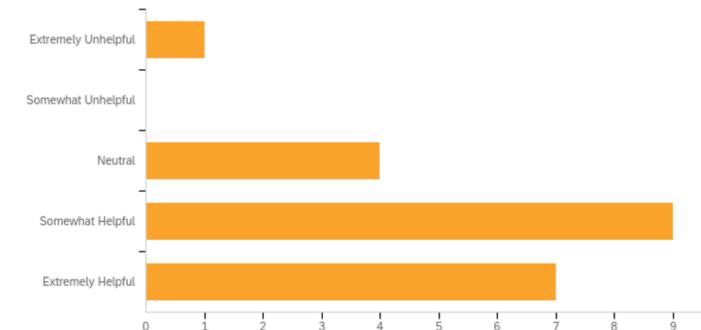
RESULTS



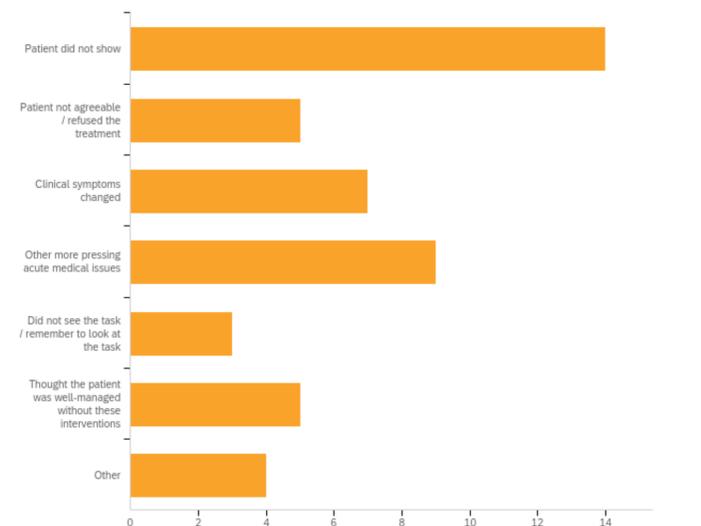
Figure 3: This chart illustrates the progress made by the psychiatric care team's chart review process during the period of June-December 2021. The team sent advice on 82 patients to primary care providers and determined 87 patient were already receiving appropriate evidence-based medicine care for their depression.

RESULTS

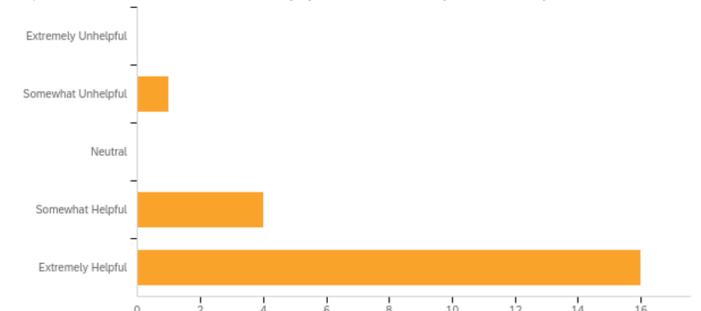
Q3 - Please rate the usefulness of the IPM e-consult.



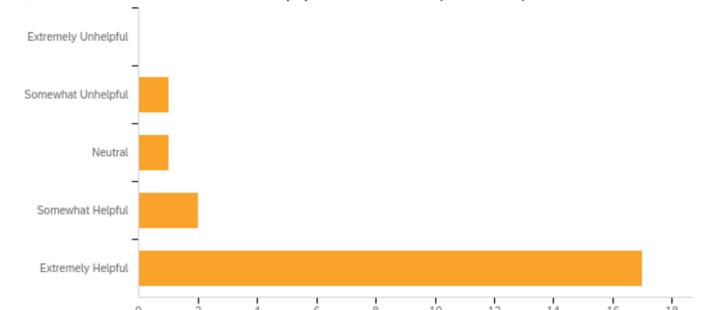
Q5 - Please select any reason(s) as to why you were unable to implement recommendations made in the IPM e-consult.



Q14 - Please rate the usefulness of psychiatric consults (clinical visits) at OneWorld.



Q15 - Please rate the usefulness of psychiatric consults (e-consults) at OneWorld.



RESULTS

Depression Remission Rates

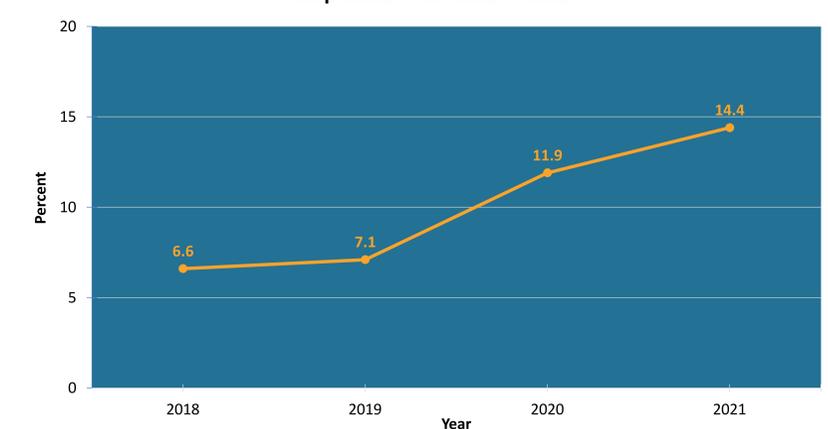


Figure 4: The clinic's annual depression remission rates were 6.6% in 2018, 7.1% in 2019, 11.87% in 2020, and 14.4% in 2021. Percent of patients in depression remission was calculated by # patients who achieved remission, as defined by a PHQ-9 <5, divided by # patients 12 years of age and older with a diagnosis of major depression or dysthymia with a PHQ-9 >9 during a primary care visit from 11/1/18-present.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- Announce therapist calls ahead of time, and measure change in response rate
- Analyze PHQ9 trend between 1) patients whose PCPs implemented consult advice, and 2) patients whose PCPs did not
- Assess longevity of depression remission post-intervention
- Use results to justify a grant to fund hiring of a care analyst who can screen charts for EBM

CONCLUSIONS

- Improvements employed a multidisciplinary approach incorporating the use of information technology specialists, therapists, psychiatric consultants, and primary care clinicians.
- The project team will examine each intervention in further detail and communicate what has been effective in improving depression remission in this primary care setting.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND DISCLOSURES

We would like to thank the staff at OneWorld Community Health Center for their assistance in coordinating and executing each of these interventions and Justin Romano MD for creating the depression treatment algorithm used to review patient charts.

No party who participated in this project has potential conflicts of interest to report