Patient Portal Engages Patients in their Health Care

For the past six months, UMass Memorial Health Care has rolled out the FollowMyHealth patient portal to Community Medical Group and Medical Center-based ambulatory practices. To date, the portal is established at 200 clinics, and out of 25,590 invitations sent to patients, some 16,960 have enrolled. The portal expanded to acute care settings in late May.

Having a patient portal that allows patients to view their medical records online is a requirement for Meaningful Use and will be an essential tool for UMass Memorial to improve our patients’ engagement in their health care. To make sure every patient’s experience with the portal is positive, The Patient Portal Direct Support Help Line is available. Through the Help Line, patients receive technical support relating to their FollowMyHealth Patient Portal account, including:

- Trouble-shooting for registration problems
- Password assistance
- Security code assistance
- Basic portal navigation
- Login or website issues

Patients with questions about the clinical content of their personal health record should contact their primary care physician via the portal or by calling the practice.

FollowMyHealth Patient Support

888-670-9775
support@followmyhealth.com
Hierarchical Condition Categories (HCC) Coding Improves Quality, Affordability

In preparation for becoming a Medicare accountable care organization (and improving performance on all risk and quality contracts), UMass Memorial Health Care is implementing support for the use of Hierarchical Condition Categories (HCC) coding.

Medicare and Medicaid use HCC coding to measure the health risk of patient panels and establish cost and quality performance metrics for providers. Already, Allscripts HCC features are active for most payors.

UMass Memorial will use HCC as a method to:

• Assess the health risks of our patients
• Identify our most vulnerable patients
• Prompt proactive outreach and management
• Improve the quality and affordability of care for our patients

The Office of Clinical Integration (OCI) team is collaborating with primary care physician leaders, UMass Memorial Medical Group and Managed Care Operations staff to educate providers and practice staff on the use of HCC coding in documentation of assessment and treatment of patients.

Initially, OCI is working with primary care practices with 500 or more Medicare beneficiaries because the baseline Medicare ACO budget for 2015 will be set largely based upon a risk adjustment factor associated with HCC codes attributed to Medicare beneficiaries in 2014.

For information, contact Thomas Scornavacca, DO, medical director, Office of Clinical Integration, at 508-334-6573 or Thomas.Scornavacca2@umassmemorial.org.

Dr. Keitz New General Internal Medicine Division Chief

Sheri Keitz, MD, PhD, joined the Department of Medicine as division chief for general internal medicine and vice chair for clinical affairs on March 31, bringing her expertise in evidence-based, multidisciplinary models of patient care. Dr. Keitz previously served as associate dean for faculty affairs at the University of Miami. She graduated from New York’s Mount Sinai School of Medicine, received her doctorate in pharmacology from City University of New York, and completed her internal medicine training and fellowship in clinical epidemiology at Duke. Welcome!

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Quality Scholars Continue Improving the Patient Experience

The fifth class of UMass Memorial Quality Scholars graduated on May 29. More than 50 trained faculty members are now teaching and incorporating quality improvement into their daily work. The program is open to physicians across the UMass Memorial Health Care system, and each year includes primary care physicians; at this year’s graduation ceremony, Richard Palken, MD, of Benedict Internal Medicine, and Joseph DiFranza, MD, of Benedict Family Medicine, shared the top honor for poster presentation, the Frank Phillips Quality Scholars Award, with radiologist Byron Chen, MD.

Quality Scholars extends over an academic year, starting in September and running to the annual Levine Quality and Safety Symposium in June. The curriculum is closely aligned with UMass Memorial’s system goals and focuses on patient-centered, high quality, safe and efficient care. Past projects have targeted key processes including:

- Improving admission summary report accuracy (Dr. Palken)
- Improving diabetes care workflows in a primary care setting (Dr. DiFranza)
- Improving screening for and management of chronic medical conditions
- Improving management of pain
- Improving compliance with hemoglobin A1c testing using a point-of-care process

The program is now recruiting providers for the 2014 – 2015 Quality Scholars class. The deadline for applications is Friday July 11, 2014. To obtain an application, contact Mitch Gitkind, MD, associate chief medical office and Quality Scholars program director, at mitchell.gitkind@umassmemorial.org.
Diabetes and Heart Care Information for Patients

The Center for the Advancement of Primary Care publishes two helpful e-newsletters for your patients. They’ll find timely information about diabetes management in our Stick to It e-newsletter, which offers exercise, diet and lifestyle tips and recipes. Learn more here. Our Pressure Points e-newsletter offers the latest lifestyle and exercise tips and healthy recipes to keep the heart in shape. Learn more here.