Patient Satisfaction Surveys in Integrated Care Settings
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Abstract

Background: Patients with chronic medical conditions are more likely to suffer from depression, anxiety and substance abuse disorders than those without chronic medical conditions. The majority of people seeking help for psychological problems are seen by their primary care physician before being seen by a mental health provider. Numerous studies show that integrating behavioral health and medical care can reduce medical costs, improve treatment compliance, enhance clinical outcomes and improve patient and provider satisfaction. According to the Institute of Medicine, one benchmark of Quality Improvement is measuring patient satisfaction with integrated care. Surveys are inexpensive, anonymous ways to collect patient satisfaction data. The purpose of this study is to choose an appropriate measure of patient satisfaction and pilot its use with the integrated behavioral health (IBH) services at Boston’s South End Community Health Center (SECCH), a primary community care center that serves nearly 20,000 people/year with a majority low-income Latino (60% Spanish speaking) and non-Latino Black (NBL) patient population with multiple chronic illnesses. The second author created a program in IBH in collaboration with physicians and mental health clinicians, and began delivering the survey in 2012.

Procedure: Following a literature search of patient satisfaction surveys used in integrated care settings, items measuring patient satisfaction were created. The interdisciplinary IBH team at the SECCH piloted a brief measure (6-item, 4-point Likert scale).

Results: Data from 27 patients showed high levels of satisfaction with IBH appointments. Discussion: Given the population at the SECCH, the IBH team found the survey required revisions including measures of satisfaction with linguistic and cultural competency of services received; therefore, the current survey will be revised to address these needs.

Conclusion

From the 32 remaining articles, 15 different types of satisfaction surveys were identified; most were not appropriate for the SECCH setting.

Methods

An extensive literature search of PsyInfo was conducted. Search terms used: “patient satisfaction AND primary care” and “patient satisfaction AND integrated care.”

Practice parameters: published articles spanning the period from 1983-2014, which yielded 279 articles. Results were reviewed systematically. Inclusion criteria included: studies that used some type of satisfaction measure in an integrated care setting or one that provided both behavioral and physical health services. See consort below for exclusions.

N=27 (10 Spanish, 17 English)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How easy was it to make your FIRST appointment?</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>0.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How easy was it to make your follow-up appointment?</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Did you get the kind of help you wanted?</td>
<td>3.22</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. How satisfied are you with the help you received?</td>
<td>3.41</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. If a friend were in need of similar help, would you recommend the health and wellness consultant to him or her?</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Has the help you received helped you deal more effectively with your concerns?</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>0.56</td>
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Integrated care involves treatment planning that includes both behavioral and medical components that can be either coordinated or co-located. Numerous studies show that integrating behavioral health and medical care can reduce medical costs, improve patient and provider satisfaction, improve patient compliance with treatment and enhance clinical outcomes (Blount, 2003).

Though research shows the benefit of integrated care programs, more outcomes research is needed. Patient satisfaction is of particular interest. It is an important to examine the effects of integration from the patient’s perspective. Patient satisfaction also affects other healthcare outcomes like death, disease and disability. High patient satisfaction correlates with higher medication adherence, and patients are more likely to follow provider recommendations (Jackson & Kroenke, 1997).

Study Goals

1. Examine how patient satisfaction with integrated care is measured in the existing literature
2. Pilot a survey at the SECCH’s IBH program in Boston, MA
3. Analyze the data and make any necessary revisions to the survey.

Measuring patient satisfaction is important when evaluating the effectiveness of integrated care programs. Results can be used in program modification and in improving services to ensure patient needs are being met. Patient satisfaction affects other healthcare outcomes and when levels of satisfaction are low, it can be more important to know their providers’ recommendations. To date, few surveys effectively evaluate integrated care programs. In effort to do so, we created and piloted a new patient satisfaction survey. Initial survey results and further evaluation of the SECCH population indicated the need for additional revisions to the survey. Revisions are underway, with survey implementation to follow.