

Patient Cancellation and No Shows on Service Quality

Improving Sleep Study Cancellation Rates

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Healthcare Studies

Introduction

- Neurocare Inc has collaborated with several different hospitals, medical centers, and private practices for over 30 years.
- The company has worked to create and run different sleep disorder programs around Massachusetts.
- Neurocare also owns its own sleep centers located in both Newton and Brockton Massachusetts.
- Both of these centers are accredited by The American Academy of Sleep Medicine.
- Main goal is to improve the overall quality of life by providing diagnostic sleep testing.
- Company executes this goal by providing efficient and comprehensive care, for both in lab patients and home sleep study patients. (Neurocare, 2021)

Objectives

- To create and design an information pamphlet for patients to receive prior to their sleep study.
- To have the patients concerns about the study be put at ease, based on sleep study FAQs and information in the pamphlet.
- Reduce cancellation rates of future appointments by providing more detailed information about the sleep study.

Related Literature

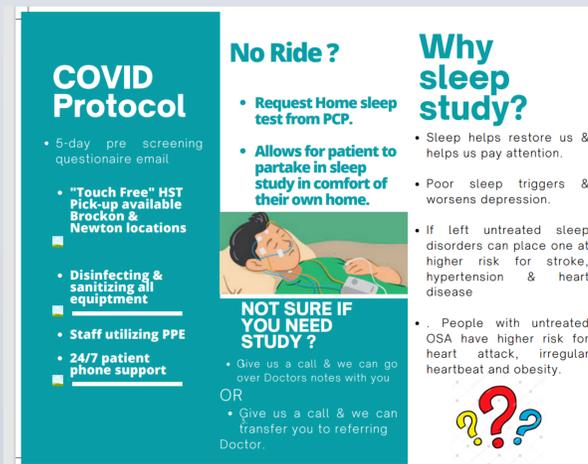
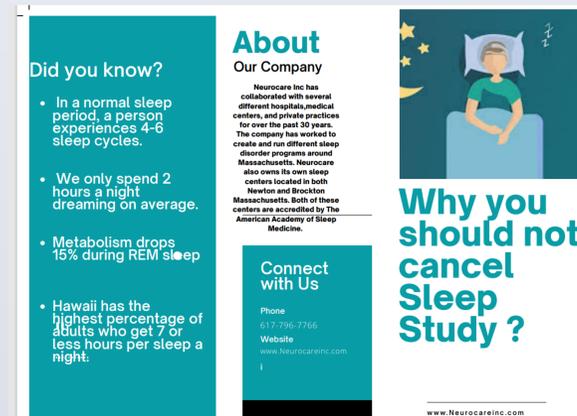
"No-shows occur, when a patient fails to attend a scheduled appointment with no prior notification to the healthcare provider. They are missed healthcare utilized time slots and resources that can negatively affect the utilization of space and human resources. Further, they can affect the patient's health condition due to the delay in diagnosis or treatment." (Marbough, 2020)

"Overall cancellation rate after reopening was higher than before shutdown. Relative risk of cancellation after reopening increased with age. Relative risk of cancellation was also higher among Medicare patients compared to Medicaid and those with other providers and non-whites compared to whites". (Amornsiripanitch, 2021)

"Cancellations occur because of administrative or structural processes that are potentially preventable. Targeting these processes may help to reduce cancellations for elective surgeries and thereby improve economic efficiency and patient outcomes." (Xian Koh, 2021)

Materials and Methods

- Performed audit of patient cancellation reports (called BAM) on Indigo Arc (Neurocares patient database system) noted reasons for patient cancellation. (pre vs post covid)
- Created new sleep study FAQ pamphlet for patients pre-sleep study.
 1. Section on why sleep studies are important
 2. Section on COVID protocol.
 3. Most common concerns (transportation) & questions about the studies
- Analyzed data collected from running reports (BAM) from before pamphlet vs after.
- After 8-10 week period, data was collected from BAM report again and compared to those reports run prior to distribution of the pamphlets



Results

- Over the course of 8-10 week period, pamphlets were distributed and will continue to be distributed in Neurocare's Newton locations patient waiting room. Schedulers also have access to a PDF version to share when communicating with patients while scheduling.
- Schedulers reported referring to the pamphlet several times when on the phone with patients who were hesitant about keeping their sleep study appointments.
- Schedulers reported patients were hesitant about their appointments due to COVID concerns, particularly with having appropriate protocols in place, including how often the clinic was sanitized.
- One patient reported to a scheduler that the pamphlet was very helpful with "deciding to go through with sleep study".



Conclusions

- Based on patient feedback, it was clear that having some sort of pamphlet/FAQ sheet pre sleep study was beneficial.
- Cancellation rates decreased by a slight amount.
- Pamphlets should be distributed at both Neurocare locations.
- Other ways of providing detailed descriptions for future sleep studies should be explored.

References

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