Implementation of Ask Me 3 to Enhance High-risk Patients’ Knowledge and Curiosity of their Specific Diagnoses and At-home Care Plans

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Purpose
This study was conducted to determine whether the Ask Me 3 is a helpful tool for improving personal health literacy in the Cerebral Palsy population at Gillette Lifetime. The goal of this study was to improve patient engagement with the use of Ask Me 3 by increasing patients’ knowledge about their specific diagnoses and at-home care plans.

Background/Significance
Patients understanding of their condition and plan of care is not always the same as what the provider thinks they have communicated. Health literacy is a concern in the outpatient settings (Sudore & Schillinger, 2008). Patients are receiving very complex outpatient care and are managing chronic care needs in the home. Health care providers must teach in a way that validates patients accurate understanding of their most important health needs, know what to do, and why the plan is important (Hibbard & Cunningham, 2008). The Ask Me 3 program is used to confirm patient knowledge and increase engagement to follow the plan of care resulting in improve health outcomes (AMA, 2013; NPSF, 2013; WI DHS, n.d.).

Method
A rapid cycle quality improvement process was established to collect data about effectiveness of the Ask Me 3 tool, ease of use, helpfulness for improving knowledge about plan of care, and likelihood of use in the future clinic appointments. Data was collected on 20 cerebral palsy patients during clinic visits between June – August 2013. Patients were instructed on the Ask Me 3. Those unaware of the tool were invited to learn about Ask Me 3, pilot the methodology during the visit, and complete a brief survey.

Results
A convenience sample of 20 English-speaking patients with cerebral palsy participated in the Ask Me 3 study. There were 12 males and 8 females with the average age of 31.6 years (range 18-70). The survey was completed by 2 patients, 7 parents, and 11 caregivers; none had used Ask Me 3 prior to this visit. Ninety percent of the patients completed the tool. Two caregivers did not use the tool reporting they already knew this information. Overall, the response was positive 85.8% reported easy to use, 82.3% would use again, and 87.7% would recommend to others.

Conclusions & Implications for Practice
The finding from this study supported the use of the Ask Me 3 tool during clinic visits for complex health care concerns. Patients report the tool is easy to use, would recommend for others, and improves/reinforces knowledge. But by itself Ask Me 3 may not be sufficient to increase patient engagement. In an effort to improve health literacy, Ask Me 3 will be expanded to additional patient populations to reinforce knowledge.

References