REDUCING DID NOT ATTEND (DNA) PERCENTAGE IN CARDIOLOGY OUTPATIENT CLINIC IN AL WAKRA HOSPITAL

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BACKGROUND

There was high number of Did Not Attend (DNA) patients in Al Wakra Hospital General Outpatient Department (GOPD). The highest of which was 41% in September 2015. It greatly affects health care service because of its counterproductive outcomes. It decreases productivity, adds burden to health care staffs, contributes to walk-ins and prolongs waiting times. In turn, it increases the cost of services and lowers patient & staff satisfaction leading to poor hospital performance. A project was initiated in October 2015 to address this significant issue. A clinic in cardiology OPD was chosen as pilot are for this project.

AIM

To reduce the percentage of Did Not Attend (DNA) patients to 20% in Cardiology Outpatient Clinic in Al Wakra Hospital by end of February 2017.

CHANGES TESTED

- All booked patients called 1 day before appointment for confirmation or cancellation or rescheduling. Designed a tracking form to monitor all appointments.
- Coordinated with RBMS and revised booking procedure by utilizing all canceled & rescheduled slots for patients in the waiting list.
- Changes in appointment system extended to General OPD and educated all staffs of new goal & procedures.
- To deter non-attendance, patient who missed two consecutive appointments instructed to get new referral from health center prior scheduling for new appointment.
- Patients provided detailed appointment instruction and were asked by physician to verbally repeat appointment information before leaving the clinic.
- Opened additional evening clinics in OPD to reduce waiting time, hence, reduce DNA’s and improve patient satisfaction.
- Designed questionnaire. Surveyed patient satisfaction on the new appointment system in Cardiology OPD.
- Tracking DNA chart.

RESULTS

- Result of Did Not Attend (DNA) percentage in Cardiology Clinic after changes were tested since October 2015.
- After significant improvement was seen for 3 months with Did Not Attend (DNA) percentage in Cardiology Clinic, changes were then extended to whole General OPD.

CONCLUSION

- Reduction in Did Not Attend (DNA) percentage brought by opening of evening clinic and streamlining the appointment reminder and DNA tracking system.
- Improved patient experience through enhanced delivery of patient service from effective communication and patient involvement with OPD reminders and follow up.
- Since the top most common reason are “Personal Issues” and “Work Commitment”, additional Evening Clinics in Cardiology Outpatient were opened. Another reason is “Patient Forgot Appointment” thus, during consultation, patients are requested by physicians to verbally repeat the appointment instruction.

NEXT STEPS

- To propose HMC guidelines for “Did Not Attend” patients and to develop an online appointment scheduling system where patients can schedule, confirm, cancel and reschedule.