



Quality Improvement Initiative Assessing and Improving Continuity of Care Utilizing Care Teams within a Family Medicine Residency Clinic



Tarek Chahine MD, Dana Achmar MD, Rob Richards MD, Tess McCready DO, Elizabeth Towner PhD
Wayne State University Family Medicine Residency Program

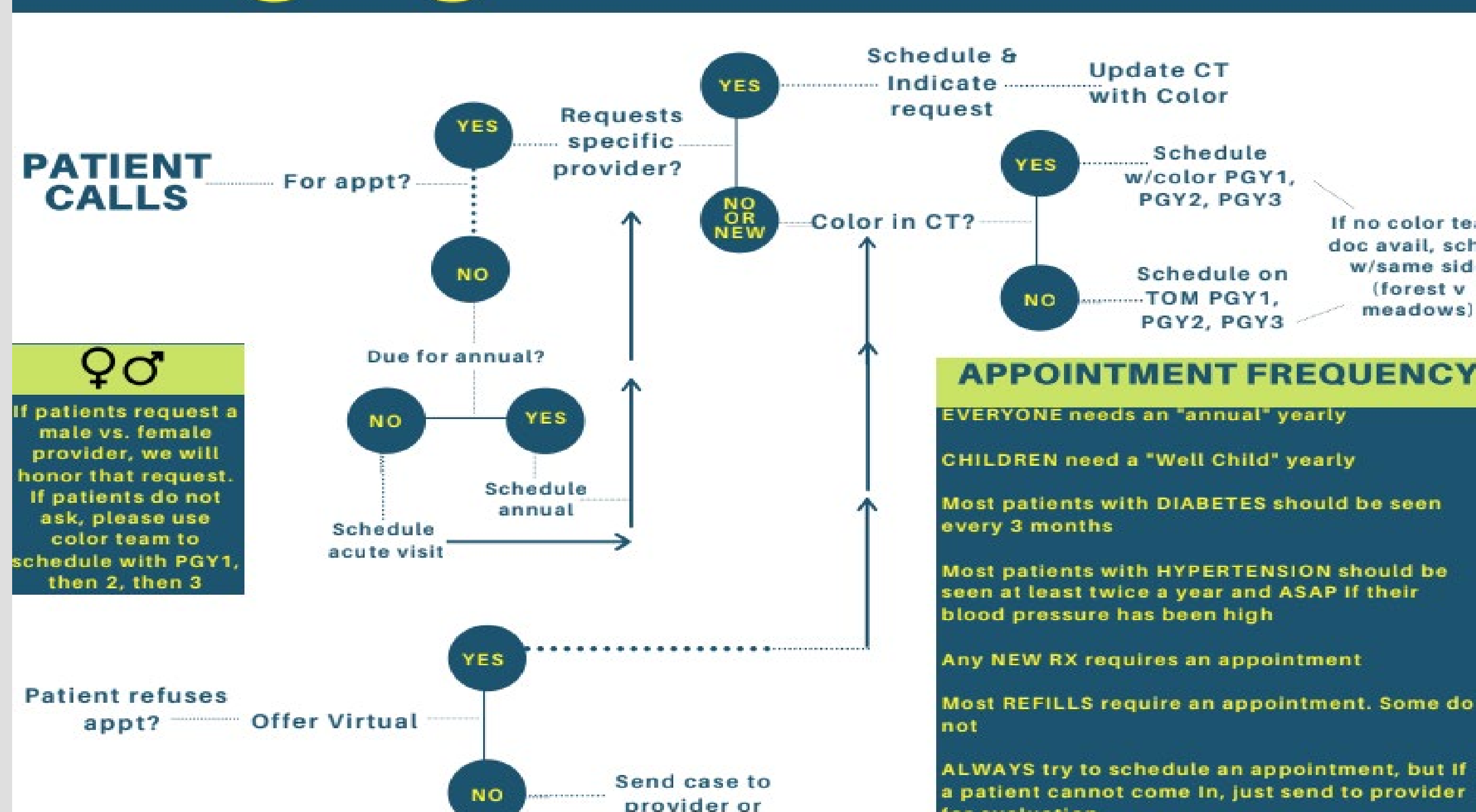
Introduction

- Continuity of care (CoC) is associated with increased patient satisfaction, stronger doctor-patient relationships, and improvements in quality of care.
- Scheduling challenges (e.g., limited availability due to other rotations) are a unique barrier to optimizing CoC in a resident run clinic.
- In our previous work, we found reminders and using the EMR follow-up feature led to some improvement in CoC.
- Care Teams (CT) are another approach and may be particularly effective at promoting CoC because they involve creating a team of providers for each patient.
- The purpose of this next phase of our QI work is to evaluate steps for establishing a CT system within our Family Medicine Clinic.

Care Team Optimization

- CT: 6 teams consisting of one Intern, PGY2, and PGY3 resident plus an attending.
- Chart reviews were conducted to quantify patient load for each CT.
- An algorithm was developed to aide clinic staff in assigning patients to CTs (see below).

Triaging Patient Calls



PDSA CYCLE 3

Plan

- Aims: improve new patient assignments to CTOM by >5% compared to other CTs. Improve overall balance of CT's by >5%
- Intervention: Clinic staff use algorithm to assign new patients to 'Care team of the month' (CTOM)



Do

- Establish baseline patient assignments for each CT, establish CTOM
- Educate staff on CTOM and assigning new patients accordingly
- Collect feedback from clinic staff on process
- Measure change at end of month



Study

- Data collected after 1 month of intervention was analyzed
- CTOM patient load increased by 5.0%; other CT's increasing from 0.3%-3.3%
- Clinic staff feedback revealed the process to schedule patients within CT's was ineffectively communicated



Act

- Establishing CTOM improved the balance of the CT's but clinic staff described the triaging process for new patients was unclear.
- Adopt: CTOM is effective tool to improve the balance of CT's
- Adapt: Improve communication of CTOM and CT patient assignments process

PDSA CYCLE 4

Plan

- Aims: Improve compliance to CT assignment process and CTOM balance by >10%.
- Intervention: Establish a visual aid for CT patient assignments and communicate the process to clinic and front desk staff who are responsible for assigning patients



Do

- Create and distribute visual flow chart of CT assignments
- Train staff on process and visual aids
- Measure end of month CT loads
- Solicit weekly feedback from clinic staff to ensure understanding and compliance with the triage process.



Study

- CTOM patient load increased by 51%, with other CT's increasing from 24%-37%
- Clinic staff feedback revealed that the process to schedule patients within CT's was effectively communicated



Act

- Adopt: CT assignment algorithm and visual flow chart.
- Adapt: Explore methods of scheduling residents within a CT on separate days of the week in clinic

CONCLUSIONS

- Utilizing CTOM is effective at improving the balance of CT's.
- Education and visual aids appear effective for improving compliance with CT assignment process.
- Future PDSA cycles should examine effect of balancing CT's on improving Continuity of Care.