



Nomination

Healthy relationships, healthy teams

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Full scope RNs in family practice improve access, continuity and reduce ER visits



Maximizing the scope of team members in a family practice setting using resources already available through the FHO structure produced significant improvements in a short period of time. By implementing a full scope role for RNs, the team was able to achieve same day access to care and reduce non-urgent ER visits (CTAS level 4& 5) by 20% in a 12 month period. These improvements were made within a practice that includes a higher than average number of elderly, of patients living in poverty, and with mental health conditions. Recognizing that this more marginalized population is more at risk, and has been shown to have more barriers to access, this

interdisciplinary team was able to provide a increased range of low threshold services using existing human resources within the team.

The team include patients in the development of this initiative by first learning about the characteristics of our patient population, researching barriers to care for marginalized populations and studying the baseline data on access to our practice for our patients. This helped us come to the realization that maximizing team roles would allow to address gaps in access and care. We then educated our patients on the role of full scope nursing in primary care, individually and collectively as a team from the front line staff to the physician. In practice, the evolution of this understanding amongst our patients of the role of nurses in their care went from our staff asking when patients called "Would you like to see the nurse?" and educating them on nursing roles to patients requesting when they called "I'd like to see the nurse".