

Telephone Triage Outcomes

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Objectives

- Define Role of Telephone Triage Nurse
- Establish Telephone Triage Protocols
- Identify How Telephone Triage Affects Patient Outcomes

Definition of Telephone Triage

- safe, effective, and appropriate disposition
- assessment, patient education, and crisis intervention.
- new subspecialty, controversial – is it telephone advice, *telepractice* or *telehealth*?
- interaction between patient and nurse that takes place via phone.

Reference:

http://www.nursingceu.com/courses/290/index_nceu.html

Retrieved 05/31/2011

WESU Telephone Triage Nurse

- Facilitate access to care
- Provide consultation and assistance to patients and their families
- Crucial to the delivery of safe and effective health care

White Earth Service Unit



- Located on White Earth Reservation in Northern MN
- Primary care and same day clinic
- Two field clinics (NTW and Pine Point)
- User population is 13, 093
- Reservation population is 9,562 (2101 census report)

White Earth Service Unit (WESU)

- Variety of services
- New facility in 1998
- Same day clinic opened 06/2000
- Many changes in process since Same Day clinic opened
- Triage nurse position began in 2000



Triage at WESU

- Dedicated Triage nurse
- Utilizes nursing judgment as well as triage protocols
- Same day appts, future appts, home measures
- Collaborative effort with entire clinic staff, outside entities
- Orders labs and x-rays with standing orders
- Policy for triage pending



Nurse Triage Standing Orders

LAB	CIRCUMSTANCE ORDERED
HCG	For late menses, prior to starting contraception
Urinalysis	For dysuria, frequency
Urine C&S	+ nitrites and blood in UA
STD screen	For pt concern, STD symptoms
Rapid strep test	For sore throat w/fever, exudate or pt concern
Blood sugar	For hypo/hyperglycemia symptoms
Cardiac panel	For acute chest pain
Wet prep	For vaginal discharge, itching
Serum HCG	Pregnant pts with vaginal bleeding
TSH	Hx or sx of hypo/hyperthyroidism, or med refills
CBC	S/sx of infection/anemia/RLQ abdominal pain
X-ray of extremity	Obvious deformity

How telephone triage affects patient outcomes

- TTN can assess a patient over the phone who may be reluctant to come in to the clinic.
- TTN can give that caller home care advice or instruct the patient on the rationale for a clinic appointment or an UC visit.
- TTN can potentially reduce deteriorations of the patient's condition.

How telephone triage affects patient outcomes

- Added benefits:
 - TTN has access to pt's EHR record while speaking to the pt.
 - Can advise pt of any upcoming or overdue preventive care, such as immunizations or women's health appts.

Triage nurses in IHS :

- Facilitates access to care
- Provide consultation and assistance to patients and their families
- Triage via phone, walk in
- Collaborate with family members, CHR, home health nurses, etc.
- Some with certification from NCC

Focus of Telephone Triage

- Focus is assessment and disposition
- Data collection Telephone triage aids in getting the patient to the right level of care with the right provider in the right place at the right time (AAACN, 2007).
- Benefits of Triage

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Who Performs Telephone Triage?

- RN
 - Clinical experience
 - triage experience preferred (walk-in or telephone)
- Current BLS certification
- High levels of experience or expertise in:
 - Crisis intervention
 - Teaching/coaching
 - Diagnostic/monitoring
- good judgment and critical-thinking skills

Telenurse Functions

- The helping function
- The diagnostic function
- The crisis-intervention function
- The monitoring function

Teletriage and the Nursing Process

- Modified version of standard nursing process
 - assessment,
 - diagnosis
 - planning and intervention
 - evaluation

Establish Telephone Triage Protocols

- Are protocols decision-making or decision-support tools?
- -critical thinking skills
- Resources for protocols:
 - Adults: Telephone triage Protocols for Nurses by Julie Briggs; Telephone Triage Protocols by Sheila Wheeler, Telephone Triage Decision Support Tools doe Nurses by Dale Woodke
 - Peds: Pediatric Telephone Advice by Barton D. Schmitt, MD

Four-Tier Triage

- Emergent-level calls.
- Urgent-level calls.
- Acute-level calls.
- Nonacute-level calls.

When In Doubt

- always err on the side of caution"
- Upgrade, never downgrade.

RESOURCES

- American Academy of Ambulatory Care Nursing (AAACN)
<http://www.aaacn.org>
- Emergency Nurses Association
<http://www.ena.org>
- Triage Systems (Author Sheila Wheeler's website)
<http://www.triage.com>

Questions?

Thank you for attending this presentation. We appreciate your time and attendance. Have a wonderful day.