



Summer Institute in Nursing Informatics 2019
Poster Presentation

A Beginning Exploration of Nurse Practitioner Perceptions in Sharing Clinical Notes with Patients

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Purpose: The purpose of this research was to describe how Nurse Practitioners (NPs) perceive sharing their clinical notes through a patient portal. Research in the area of sharing clinical notes has focused on the perceptions of physicians and other healthcare providers. To date, there are no studies on the perceptions of the NP, which was the driving force for this research. Sharing of clinical notes and conversations they generate have been identified with improved medication adherence, better understanding of treatment plans, and increased engagement in one's health care. There have been some questions raised about possible increased workloads and the perception that patients may misunderstand what is written, as well as possible HIPAA violations. **Research Question:** What are the perceptions of nurse practitioners having their clinical notes shared with the individual through a patient portal?

Methods: A descriptive quantitative study was conducted to address the research question. To that date, the literature had not addressed the NP who shares clinical notes with patients and it was felt that a descriptive approach was needed to describe the current state. The research study was approved by the Purdue University Global's Institutional Review Board (IRB). **Results:** A total of 57 participants responded to the request to participate. The majority were Family NPs (61.4%) and 70.2% were MSN prepared. The majority had been in practice for six or more years (63.2%). Approximately half used patient portals where their clinical notes were shared with their patients. Participant perceptions about sharing their clinical notes were somewhat to very positive (40.3%; n = 23). Many (90%) identified their greatest concerns were whether patients did or would be able to read and understand their clinical notes, along with the impact on patients based on how they wrote their notes. More than 70% felt specifically apprehensive about patients not understanding medical terminology. Open-ended question responses indicated that participants were concerned about provider and patient honesty in providing information. They wrote that they would be less likely to include details that might be misinterpreted by patients. Several participants were more positive in their responses, writing that they were "comfortable allowing my patients [sic] read their clinical notes", that "an even greater need to make myself clear and well understood when speaking to them" resulted from the sharing, and one felt "that it may improve the understanding of their care plan, and improve self-management". **Implications for Nursing Practice:** The change resulting from electronic healthcare records presents an accompanying shift in organizational culture to create better environments for patients, including improving ways of communicating that engage patients and their families. Shared clinical notes provide an opportunity to achieve these goals. NPs can facilitate this transition to shared clinical notes by having meaningful conversations about what is being written and why. This process may provide an opportunity to explore attitudes and perceived barriers to understanding health promotion and disease prevention, disease management, and patient and family education.