Electronic Care Plans - Nurse Informaticist's Role as Advocate

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This presentation will provide an overview of electronic care plan standards, strategies to identify clinically-relevant and meaningful concepts for exchange, identify the benefits of adoption, and suggest how to increase implementation and use. Electronic care plans can improve efficiency and resolve the duplicate entry issues that are associated with paper care plans and standards that make them interoperable. Nevertheless, uptake and adoption of electronic care plans lags behind the adoption of interoperable electronic health records (EHRs). Consolidated Clinical Document Architecture (C-CDA) provided a standard for electronic exchange of care plan information. Vendors have access to a care plan standard that generates a document from a C-CDA compliant EHRs. The C-CDA care plan contains input from interdisciplinary team members about patient health concerns, a list of patient goals with appropriate interventions, and progress towards these goals. The C-CDA care plan, which is a general care plan, became the foundation for specialty-specific care plans for pharmacists, oncologists and nutritionists. The rate of adoption for these each of these specialty standards remains low, with the exception of the electronic pharmacy care plan (ePhCP). Pharmacy services are a key segment in the continuum of care. The implementation and adoption of the ePhCP exemplifies how a pharmacist can share information with support teams to improve care team collaboration, reduce duplicative data entry, support medication reconciliation, and contribute to value based care through quality measurement. An ONC-funding High Impact Pilot for electronic care planning supported development of two ePhCP specifications: one based on C-CDA and the other using the emerging Fast Healthcare Interoperability Resources (FHIR) standard. By the conclusion of the pilot, 22 vendors had opted in to implement one or the other of the ePhCP standards. This presentation will include examples of care plan exchanges between a primary care provider and pharmacy and between a pharmacy and state Medicaid. The presentation will illustrate methods to capture core clinical data elements in a care plan and track patients through different settings. As electronic care plan standards evolve, nurse informaticists play a central role in pursuing the viability and applicability of care plans across healthcare settings. Nurses are the common denominator in most care settings and have the power to drive change. Nurse informaticists involved in standards development can contribute their expertise to identify core concepts critical to patients' journeys in the continuum of care. Nurse informaticists are in the position to advocate for the use and adoption of care plan standards. Improvements in patient outcomes inspire this effort. From Florence Nightingale forward, patient outcomes remain the central focus of nursing. The presentation will include actionable suggestions to further electronic care plan adoption. Nurses must adapt their practice to the digital age and advocate for increased communication across the continuum of care through electronic care plans.