

Derail Depression: A Quality Improvement Program - The Good, Bad and Ugly

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So, you really want to do a QI program? Get ready for a roller coaster ride with ups and downs but a possible photo finish! Responding to an industry RFP, we partnered with multiple stakeholders to create a program in Major Depressive Disorder (MDD). MDD is a common cause of disability in people ages 15-44, resulting in 400 million disability days per year. Symptoms are often easy to misdiagnose and undertreat in the primary care setting, where most patients present. Additionally, there two were specific key points that needed to be addressed concerning our program design and our approach to outcomes assessment:

(1) most PCPs do not use measurement-based care through depression-monitoring tools (eg, PHQ-9), limiting their ability to monitor whether therapies are successfully managing their patients; and

(2) many PCPs do not know when to change or update treatment, failing to recognize when adjunctive therapy and/or mental health consultation are necessary.

Our resulting program utilized a unique approach, combining online education, collaboration/on-site training with key stakeholders, a patient-centered app, as well as employing an advanced analytic design (predictive modeling) in order to measure and validate the that the changes observed in the EHR data were attributable to the educational components of the program and not outside sources.

Through a panel discussion of the above program, this session will help participants understand how to design and execute a successful QI project with multiple stakeholders and challenges. Specifically, we will detail and discuss: Selecting your partners – getting buy in; Managing the IRB; Designing the educational program (faculty, content, format); Working with the Epic EHR; Measuring outcomes pre/post (what and when to measure); Designing and implementing a patient iOS/Android app to provide additional data points; Designing a referral base for more advanced care; Promoting the program (project champions, faculty, participants and patients); Providing regular updates with supporters; and Conducting predictive modeling to assess and validate performance-based changes from data collected from the EHR. After attending this program, participants will understand what it takes to create an effective QI program.