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Depression in Patients with Cardiovascular Disease

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Depression is common among patients with cardiovascular disease. This evidence-based project was designed to evaluate the impact of a practice improvement intervention for screening and referrals in cardiac patients with depression. The American Heart Association Advisory Council recommends depression screening, treatment and support to provide adequate diagnosis, treatment and follow-up to patients. Cardiac rehabilitation (CR) is a coordinated effort of structured treatments including depression screening of patients upon admission. The problem is current depression screening and referrals are not being documented electronically in the CR setting limiting real-time communication amongst the healthcare team. Descriptive data (number of patients screened, positive screens documented and number of appropriate referrals completed electronically) were collected and evaluated. This project successfully implemented a new electronic Patient Health Questionnaire 2-9 (PHQ2-9) depression and referral screening document flow sheet. A 30-day post intervention chart audit revealed a 97% documentation improvement rate for PHQ2-9 surveys. 11% of the patients screened positive for moderate depression. 27% of those patients received a documented referral. Improving the current charting system to an electronic charting system should enhance communication between members of the cardiac multidisciplinary team to improve patient care. Further research and staff education need to occur to align patients with moderate to severe depression with a referral. The overall goal of this project was to provide the best evidence for practice improvement in depression care for patients with cardiac disease.

Biography

Heidi Winslow is working as full-time Lecturer at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington School of Nursing. In addition to teaching, she is staff registered nurse in the Cardiac Rehabilitation Unit at New Hanover Regional Medical Center in Wilmington, NC. Her research interests are using technology to improve depression in patients with chronic medical conditions.

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