

Asthma Management in an Urban Community Health Clinic: A Guideline Approach

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Asthma exacerbations are one of the most common causes for walk-in health care visits in the community healthcare setting. In the United States, there are approximately 1.8 million asthma-related visits to the emergency department each year. Appropriate initial treatment of patients with asthma could reduce acute exacerbations, improve quality of life, and potentially reduce the number of asthma-related complications including death. This quality improvement project involved the development and implementation of an Asthma Exacerbation Protocol based on The National Asthma Education and Prevention Program recommendations. The protocol was created to guide medical providers and staff in evidence based management of adult asthma. The interventions of this DNP project focused on documenting education for asthmatic patients, prescribing controller medications for all patients with a diagnosis of moderate persistent asthma or greater, and performing spirometry at appropriate intervals. Providers and staff were educated on the protocol. Retrospective pre-implementation data was compared against post-implementation data collected from chart review (N=30). Analysis of the data showed that after implementation of the Asthma Exacerbation Protocol, spirometry assessment rates increased from 16% to 83%, prescriptions of controller medications increased from 53% to 93% and asthma education documentation went from 46% to 96%. The analysis revealed that greater than 75% improvement in all areas was achieved. This Asthma Exacerbation Protocol may serve as a guide to improving evidence based practice in adult patients with moderate to severe asthma.

