Home Health Quality Improvement
National Campaign

Best Practice Intervention
Fast Track Package
Hospitalization Risk Assessment

HHQI
Home Health Quality Improvement

This material was prepared by Quality Insights of Pennsylvania, the Medicare Quality Improvement Organization Support Center for Home Health, under contract with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The contents presented do not necessarily reflect CMS policy. Publication number 85OW-PA-HHQI07.369, App. 2/28/07.
Fast Track... Hospitalization Risk Assessment
Best Practice Intervention to Reduce ACH

**Fast Track** is a quick overview of the key concepts about optimizing a Hospitalization Risk Assessment as a best practice intervention to reduce avoidable hospitalizations. This is designed for home health agencies that need a simplistic approach to education and implementation of the intervention.

**Definition:** A Hospitalization risk assessment is an intervention used to determine the risk of patient hospitalization and is completed at targeted intervals. Specific interventions are implemented for those patients rated as high risk to reduce the potential of an unplanned hospitalization. (©2006 Briggs® National Quality Improvement/Hospitalization Reduction Study Sponsored by: Briggs® Corporation, NAHC and Fazzi Associates, Inc.)

**What:** The completion of the hospitalization risk assessment should be part of a comprehensive assessment to identify those patients who are at risk for hospitalization, especially older adults. This can be either paper based or integrated into your vendor software.

**When:** Hospitalization risk assessments should be completed at Start of Care (SOC) and Resumption of Care (ROC). The assessments may also be appropriate at Recertification and Significant Changes in Condition.

**Follow-Up:** Hospitalization risk may be minimized with specific interventions incorporated into a high-risk patient’s plan of care. Examples of interventions:
- Patient emergency planning
- Medication management
- Front-loading visits
- Phone monitoring
- Telemonitoring
- Teletriage
- Fall prevention
- Immunization
- Patient self-management
- Disease/case management

**Communication:** The interdisciplinary team, on call staff, physicians, and agency managers and payers should be notified of patients identified as being at high-risk for hospitalization. The patient/family/caregiver should be advised of their risk for hospitalization as well.

**Sample:** A hospitalization risk assessment tool is provided on the next page. This can be modified for your agency’s patient population. Your agency may want to select a threshold score to target patients at high risk.

**Additional Resources:** The complete Best Practice Intervention Package can be found at [www.homehealthquality.org/hh/hha/interventionpackages/hra.aspx](http://www.homehealthquality.org/hh/hha/interventionpackages/hra.aspx). You may use as many or as few tools and resources as you need to support reducing acute care hospitalizations.
Hospitalization Risk Assessment

Purpose: Screening tool to identify those at risk for hospitalization.

Patient Name: ___________________________ Record # ____________
Date: ___________________

Prior pattern: Check all that apply

- > 1 Hospitalizations or ER visits in the past 12 months
- History of falls * (Complete Falls Risk Assessment)

Chronic conditions: Check all that apply (M0230/M0240)

- CHF
- Diabetes
- COPD
- Chronic skin ulcers (Wound consult if indicated for any wounds)
- HIV/AIDS

Risk Factors: Check all that apply

- Discharged from hospital or skilled nursing facility (M0175)
- Help with managing medications needed (M0780) ★
- More than 2 secondary diagnoses (M0240)
- Non-compliance with medication regimen ♦ ★
- Low socioeconomic status or financial concerns ♦
- Confusion (M0570) ♦ ★
- Lives alone (M0340) ♦ ★
- Pressure ulcer (M0445) ★
- Inadequate support network ♦
- Stasis ulcer (M0468) ★
- ADL assistance needed ♦
- Short life expectancy (M0280) ■
- Home safety risks ♦ ★
- Poor prognosis (M0260) ■
- Dyspnea (M0490) ★
- Low literacy level ♦
- Consider Therapy referral (PT, OT, ST) ★
- Consider MSW referral
- Consider Hospice referral ★
- Consider RN referral, if not ordered

Total # of checked boxes is ______. Your agency may want to select a threshold score to target patients at high risk. (For example: 5 or greater risk factors may indicate that the patient is at risk for hospitalization. Note: This number is for convenience only and has not been tested or validated. The agency may modify the score based upon the needs of their patient population.)

Consider implementing any of the following interventions, if patient is at risk for hospitalization:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Referrals:</th>
<th>Medication Management</th>
<th>Patient/family education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SN, PT, OT, ST, MSW, HHA, Dietary Consultant</td>
<td>Reconciliation</td>
<td>Enrollment into a disease management program (specify):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Assessment patient's: knowledge, ability, resources and adherence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospice/Palliative Referral</td>
<td>Phone Monitoring</td>
<td>Immunizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Influenza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individualized Patient Emergency Care Plan</td>
<td>Front-loading Visits</td>
<td>Pneumonia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| | | Care Coordination (Physicians, hospitals, nursing homes…)
| Fall Prevention Program | Telemonitoring | Other: |

Consider notification of any/all of the following if patient is at risk for hospitalization:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Patient/family/caregiver</th>
<th>Interdisciplinary Team</th>
<th>On Call Staff</th>
<th>Payer: (e.g. Managed Care Organizations)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physician</td>
<td></td>
<td>Agency Case Manager</td>
<td>Other:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Clinician Signature: ___________________________ Date: ____________

Adapted from Personal Touch Home Care, VA 6/25/04 Professional Practice Model.

The following articles provide more information on risk assessments: