

Poster number Th 16

Poster title: Implementation of an Evidence-Based Anxiety Management Process into the Pediatric Primary Care Setting: A Quality Improvement Project

Abstract: 1. Background and Significance: Anxiety affects approximately 5.8 million American children. The COVID-19 pandemic increased children's mental health needs. In October 2022, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommended screening children aged 8-18 years for anxiety. Identifying anxiety allows patients to be referred for treatment and future risks reduced. 2. Purpose: To improve the quality of pediatric primary healthcare by implementing an evidenced-based anxiety management process into wellness visits for children and adolescents aged 8 to 18 years. Aims: Develop a comprehensive provider anxiety literacy plan to increase knowledge and awareness; Create inclusive anxiety literacy tools for patients; Integrate a structured management process for anxiety screening and referral. 3. Problem statement: In patients ages 8 to 18 years in a pediatric primary care setting (P), how does the implementation of an evidence-based anxiety management process (I) compared to no use of a management process (C) affect the number of patients referred for anxiety treatment during a wellness visit (O1), caregiver satisfaction with the care received (O2), and the percentage of caregivers in communication with a mental health specialist for anxiety treatment (O3) over a 10-week period (T)? 4. Methods: Providers and caregivers will be educated on anxiety symptoms. The SCARED tool will be completed by the patient or caregiver during the wellness exam. Patients will be referred to a mental healthcare provider if the SCARED score is 25 or greater. The Caregiver Satisfaction Scale will be completed by the family. Follow-up on the referred care will be documented. 5. Results: Data to be collected and analyzed August-December 2023. Results will be available early 2024. 6. Discussion/conclusions: Utilizing the SCARED tool in the pediatric primary care setting to evaluate for anxiety supports the quintuple aim for healthcare improvement and will increase awareness of mental health concerns.

Presenter: Jennifer Uzzell – APRN, CPNP-PC, PMHS, CLC

Job title: Pediatric Nurse Practitioner

Department: Pediatric Primary Care

Organization: Pediatric Healthcare of Northwest Houston

Location: Tomball, Texas

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