Implementation of a Health Literacy Assessment Tool Among Caregivers of Children with Persistent Asthma

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Rationale

- Low health literacy contributes to poor asthma outcomes, including more frequent exacerbations.
- Despite its recognized benefit, formal health literacy assessment in outpatients may not often be performed due to various challenges.
- Prior to April 1, 2019, health literacy was not formally measured in our complex asthma clinic.

Methods

- QI methodology was implemented in a pediatric asthma clinic to improve outpatient assessment of caregiver health literacy.
- Several barriers to routine health literacy assessment were encountered, chiefly staff workflow disruption and the language barrier presented by non-English speaking patient families.

Results

- Over 9 months, 150 surveys were collected from 188 complex asthma clinic patients.
- Total collection rate = 79.8%, which is just below the goal of 80%.
- Survey collection rates improved over the first 4 months (April 61% → June 76% → July 90%) before plateauing.
- For English speaking families, survey collection has met or exceeded the goal in 6 of the past 8 months.
- Survey collection in non-English speaking patients improved with the introduction of translated surveys in month 7.
- Plan Do Study Act (PDSA) cycles were employed to test changes and outcomes tracked following each change.

Conclusions

- QI methodology was implemented in a pediatric asthma clinic to improve outpatient assessment of caregiver health literacy.
- Several barriers to routine health literacy assessment were encountered, chiefly staff workflow disruption and the language barrier presented by non-English speaking patient families.

References