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Enna Edouard Trevathan
University of San Francisco, etrevathan@usfca.edu

Kelly Hautala

Lars Osterberg

Peter Lee

Sandra Parkes

See next page for additional authors

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Authors

Enna Edouard Trevathan, Kelly Hautala, Lars Osterberg, Peter Lee, Sandra Parkes, Marites Relos, Rose Callejas, and Mary Lou Faustina

Enhancing the New Patient Care Experience by Personalizing the New Patient Lab Screening Order Set



Enna Trevathan, RN, DNP, MBA, CNL, Kelly Hautala, MS, MA, RN, Lars Osterberg, MD, Peter Lee, MD, Sandra Parkes, MS, RN, Marites Relos, RN, Rose Callejas, RN, Mary Lou Faustina, MS, RN
VA Palo Alto Health Care System

Abstract

This project improvement pilot examined the possibility of enhancing the new patient care experience by personalizing the new patient pre-visit labs as opposed to utilizing routine lab order sets. Feedback questionnaires were distributed to all Nurses and Providers two weeks prior to the observation period and two weeks following the observation period. Measurement scale was grouped into six categories: Not effective, Somewhat effective, Moderately effective, Effective, Very Effective and Not applicable. Project improvement pilot was conducted over a course of fifteen days. Results showed both providers and nurses found the ordering of customized labs prior to the initial meeting to be most effective during the new patient's visit.

Introduction

The VA Palo Alto Health Care System (VAPAHCS) consists of three inpatient and outpatient facilities located at Palo Alto, Menlo Park, and Livermore, plus seven community based outpatient clinics located in San Jose, Capitola, Monterey, Stockton, Modesto, Sonora, and Fremont.

VAPAHCS is a teaching hospital, providing a full range of patient care services with state-of-the-art technology as well as education and research. An affiliation with Stanford University School of Medicine provides a rich academic environment including medical training for physicians in almost all specialties and subspecialties. Over 1,300 University residents, interns, and students are trained each year. Additionally VAPAHCS helps train approximately 500 nursing students each year and is actively affiliated with 18 nursing programs.

Patient centered care and the use of team based, coordinated approaches to working with Veterans are major principles of Patient Aligned Care Teams (PACT). One challenge to PACT is the lack of coordination in new patient visits. New patient appointments are often made by the VA Business office. Regardless of medical history and condition, all patients receive routine orders for laboratory work to be performed prior to their first medical appointment. However, this practice contributes to an incomplete clinical assessment and unnecessary delays in administering appropriate treatment plans for individuals with chronic conditions i.e. diabetes, coronary artery disease, and thyroid disorders.

Purpose

To assess the possibility of enhancing the effectiveness of the new patient care experience by personalizing the new patient pre-visit labs as opposed to utilizing routine lab order sets.

VA PAHCS LAB TEST REQUEST	
Complete the following before lab arrival.	
Come to the lab at least 3 days prior to clinic visit if possible.	
Patient Name:	Last Name, First Name Middle Initial
Clinic / Provider: GMC-NEW	(Enter name from the patient appointment letter)
Date of Birth:	Month - Day - Year
SSN:	Last 4 numbers of SSN
Patient Instructions: 1. You must be fasting for 12 hours prior to blood draw. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not eat anything. You may drink a small amount of water, but no juice, tea, coffee or other beverages. Continue to take any medications unless instructed otherwise by your physician. 2. Bring 3 items with you to the lab: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appointment Letter Lab Test Request Identification (with picture and social security # or date of birth) 3. Print name, date of birth, SSN (last 4) and Clinic/Provider in box on left.	

VA PALO ALTO HCS LABORATORY LOCATIONS

Palo Alto Division 3801 Miranda Avenue Palo Alto, CA 94304 Lab: Bld-100, 1 st Floor Open: 7:30am-5pm	Fremont Clinic 39199 Liberty St. Fremont, CA Lab: Bldg 8 Open: 7 am-2:30pm	Livermore Division 4951 Arroyo Road Livermore, CA 94550 Lab: Bldg 62, 2 nd floor Open: 7:30am-4:30pm	Menlo Park Division 795 Willow Road Menlo Park, CA 94025 Lab: Bld 334, 1 st floor Open: 7:30-3:30pm	Modesto Clinic 1524 McHenry Ave. Modesto, CA 95350 Lab: Suite 311 Open: 7 am-noon
Monterey Clinic 3403 Engineer Lane Seaside, CA 93955 Open: 8 am-4:00pm	San Jose Clinic 80 Great Oaks Blvd. San Jose, CA 95119 Open: 8 am-4 pm	Sonora Clinic 13663 Mono Way Sonora, CA 95370 Open: 6:30-11:00am	Stockton Clinic 7777 So. Freedom Dr. French Camp, CA 95231 Open: 8 am - noon	

For LABORATORY Staff:

In VISTA: T1-Multipurpose Accession,
Test Group: New Patient Test Panel (for appointment clinic)
Enter: Patient Name, then SF
Enter: Patient Clinic (from above or from appointment letter) i.e., GMC-New-Provider's Name
Enter: Provider (associated with clinic name)
Tests to accession: Select each test by number, separated by comma
Nature of Order: Written

Date Collected: _____ Time: _____ Initials: _____ Small accession label: _____

Assessment

A tool was developed for the providers (MD and RN) to assess the effectiveness of the new patient visit

Measured at two weeks prior and two weeks post

New Patient Lab Screening/GMC-RN Telephone Encounter

Health Conditions (check box for all "Yes" responses)

Diabetes (Type 1 or Type 2)

High Blood Pressure/Hypertension

Coronary artery disease and/or heart attack

High Cholesterol

Stroke

Hepatitis (Type A, B, or C)

Thyroid Problems (hypo or hyper)

Anemia

Kidney Disease

Check box for "yes"

Have you had any labs done in the last 3 months?

Were they done at the Palo Alto VA or another VA?

Were they done outside the VA system?

If answer is yes:

Where were they done? _____

What tests were ordered? _____

When were they done? _____

HIV screening is now recommended for all patients. Would you like this added to your health screening?

If patient answers "yes"

Are you interested in receiving written information about HIV testing?

If patient answers "yes" include the following in the note:

Screen for HIV Infection:
The patient has verbally consented to HIV Testing. An HIV Antibody test will be ordered (HIV AB SCREEN). The patient was offered written educational materials and any questions regarding testing were answered. The patient was informed that negative testing results will be disclosed to the patient in clinic or by telephone, and that positive test results will be disclosed in person in clinic with appropriate referral for HIV care.

Are there any other lab tests that you would want done?

If so, which ones? _____

Can you please tell me if the primary reason for your visit:

Total Transfer of care

Audiology appointment or Optometry referral

Medication refill or new prescription

Other

Do you have any other questions for me at this time? (if any questions are medically relevant, please include in note)

New Patient Lab Screening Order Set

Providers/Nurses

Please return to Charge Nurse

1. How effective was the first encounter when meeting the new patients' needs without any pre-ordered labs?

Not effective Somewhat effective Moderately effective Effective Very effective Not applicable

1 2 3 4 5 NA

2. How effective was the first encounter when meeting the new patients' needs with standardized labs? (Lab letter given to patient by the business office)

Not effective Somewhat effective Moderately effective Effective Very effective Not applicable

1 2 3 4 5 NA

3. How effective would the first encounter be when meeting the new patients' needs with customized set of labs? (RN care coordinator initiates phone call, RN obtains brief medical history, notes forwarded to provider. Provider orders lab based on medical history. Provider notifies LVN/RN of lab order request. RN/LVN calls patient and advises of lab orders)

Not effective Somewhat effective Moderately effective Effective Very effective Not applicable

1 2 3 4 5 NA

Your participation is greatly appreciated

Please return to Charge Nurse

Our Assumptions

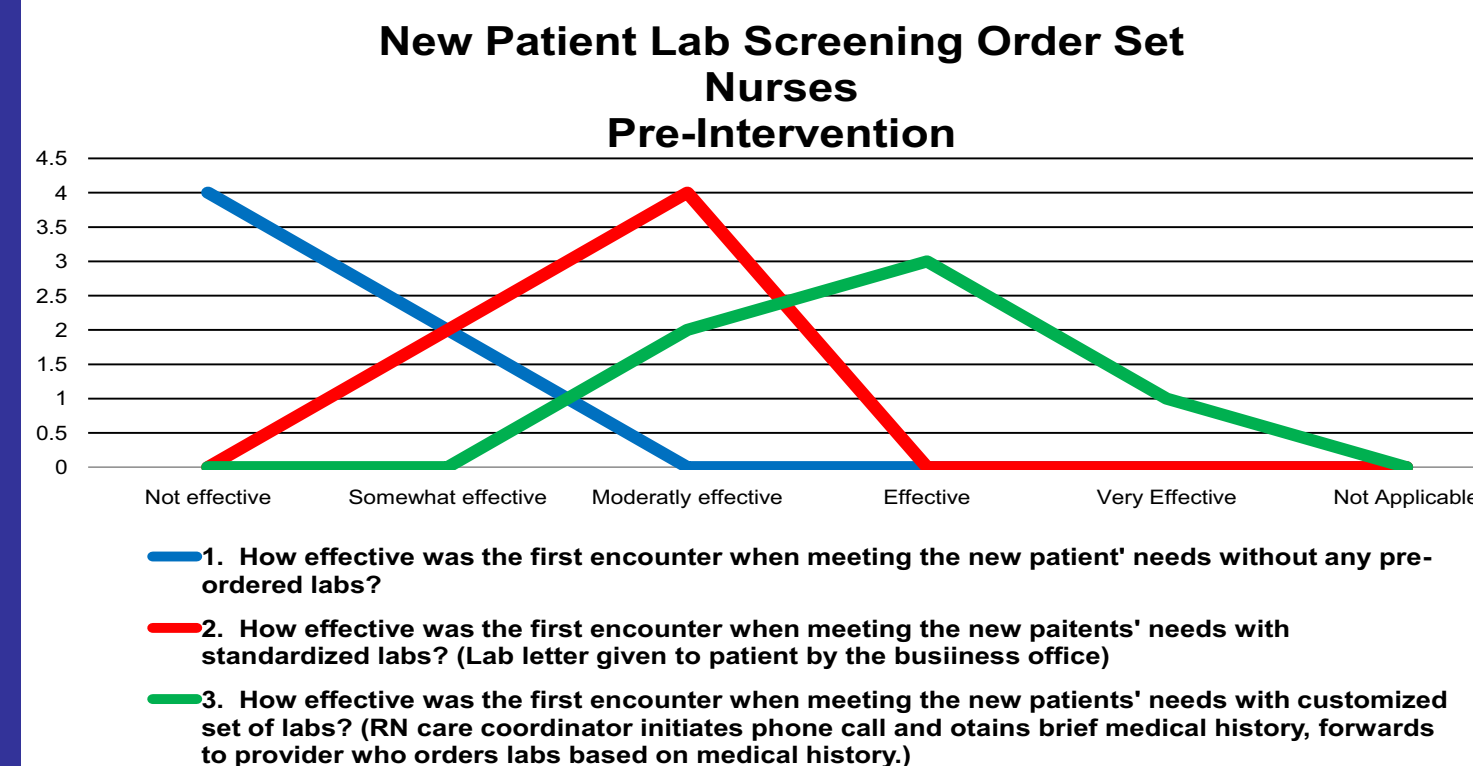
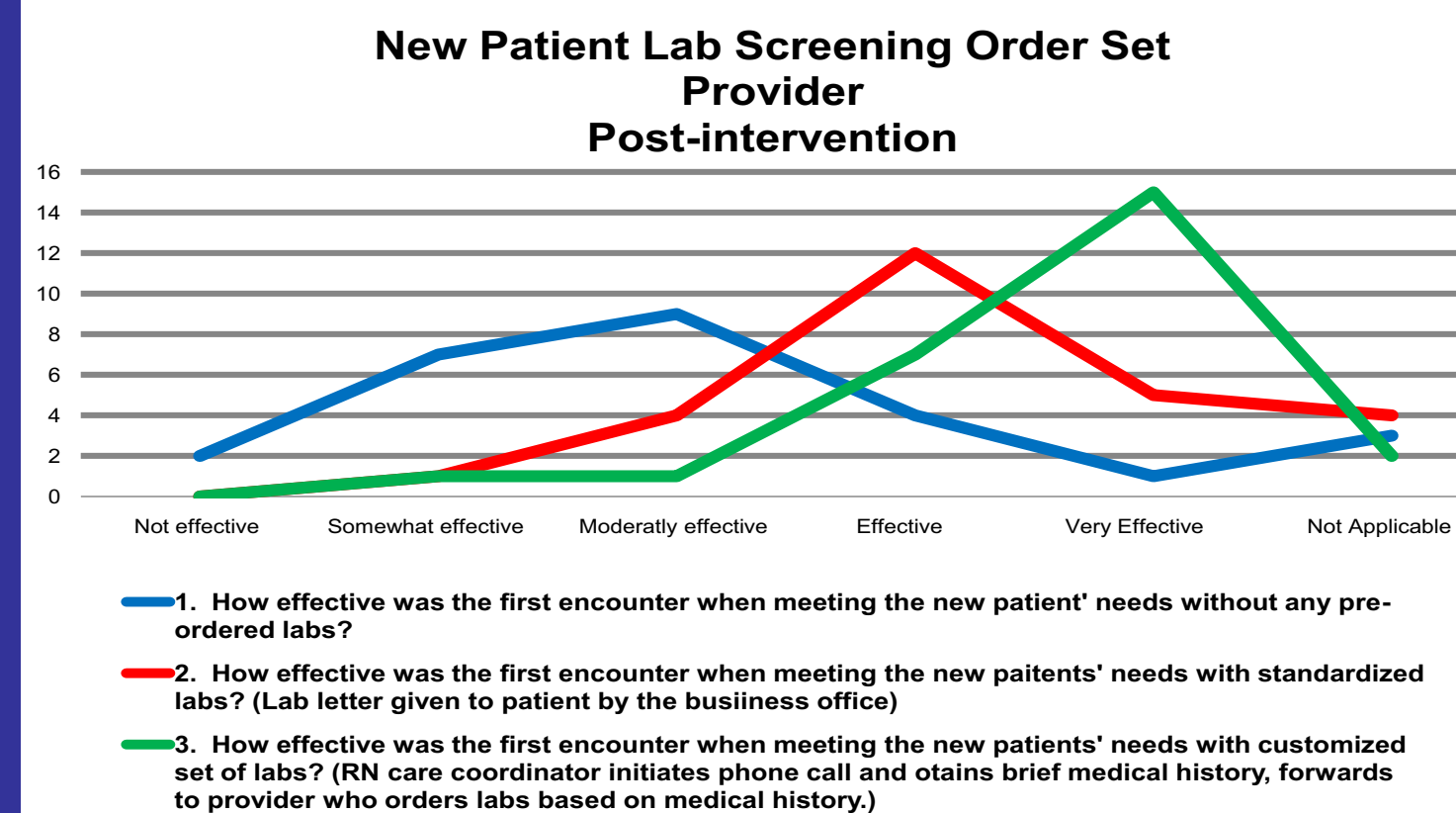
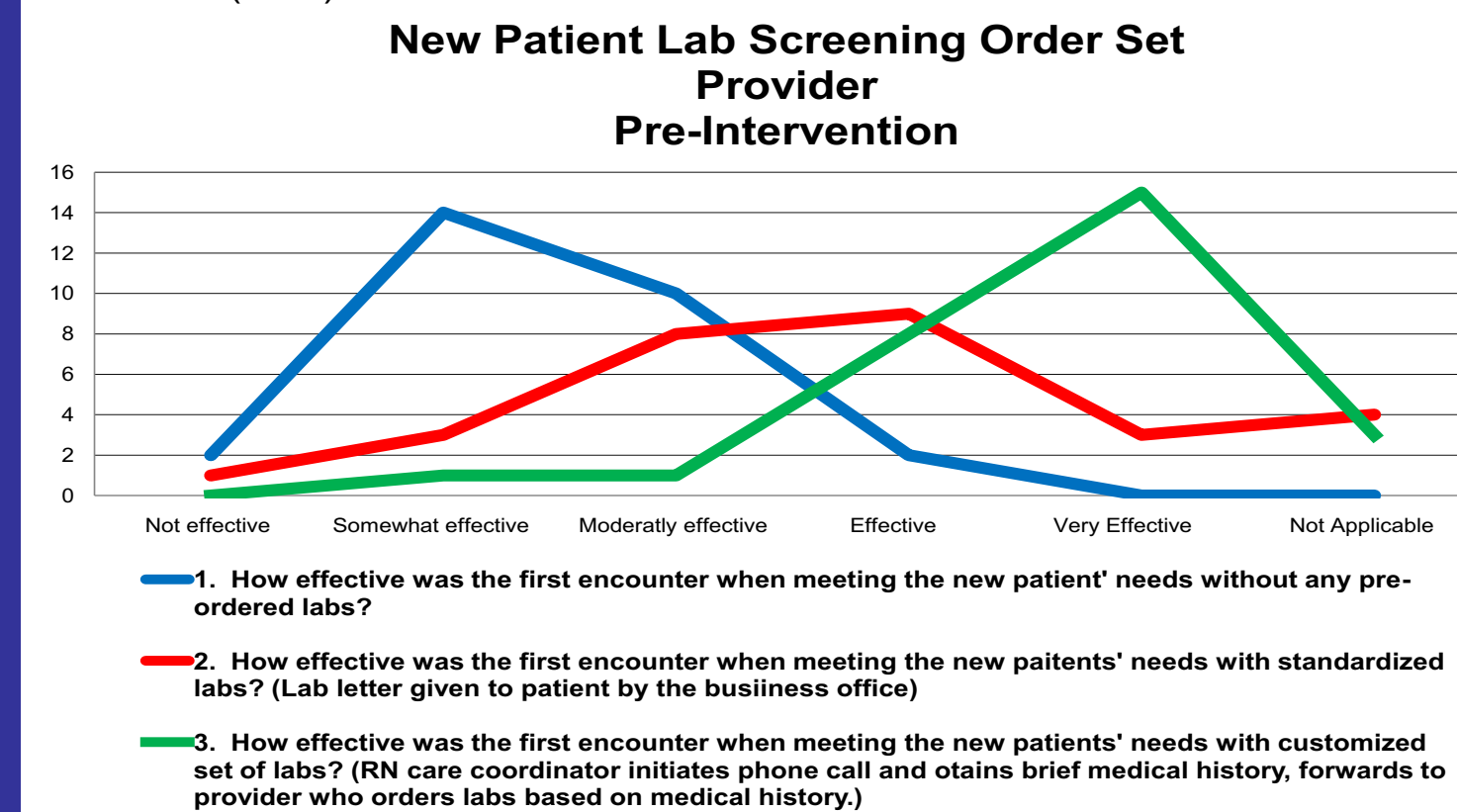
- 1) Providers and Nurses would rate the effectiveness when meeting the new patients' needs without pre-ordered labs to be least effective.
- 2) Providers and Nurses would find the effectiveness when meeting the new patient's needs with standardized labs to be somewhat effective.
- 3) Providers and Nurses would find the effectiveness when meeting the new patient's needs with customized set of labs to be most effective.

Results

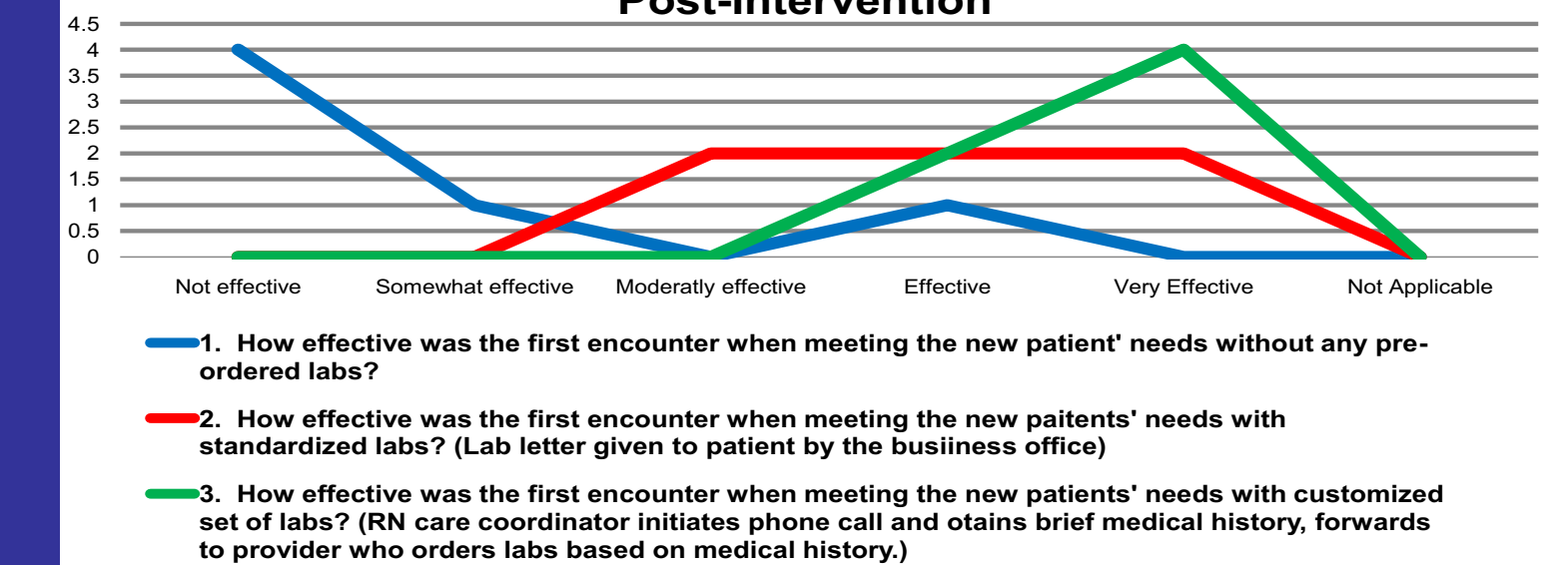
Participants:
•57 Providers
•6 Nurses
•42 new prescheduled patients were called

During the fifteen day observation period:
• 28 providers (49%) completed the preliminary feedback tool
• 27 providers (47%) completed the post feedback tool
• 6 nurses (100%) completed the pre and post feedback tool

During the fifteen day observation period:
•28 patients arrived for their first visit
•5 (18%) no-showed
•9 (32%) cancelled



New Patient Lab Screening Order Set Nurses Post-Intervention



Conclusion

The New Patient visit was viewed as most effective by both providers and nurses when a customized set of pre-visit labs were ordered based on the patient's chronic medical conditions and need for specific laboratory tests

Providers and nurses anticipated that the New Patient visit would be most effective when customized labs were ordered before the New Patient visit

Once the Patient Assessment Tool was implemented by the nurses and new patients were screened over the telephone for common medical conditions, providers were able to order specific labs that were more individualized for each patient

This resulted in a more effective New Patient visit as viewed by both providers and nurses

Limitations

The study duration was somewhat brief due to time limitations. Calls to New Patients were made over a two week period

Providers who completed Pre and Post feedback tools were nonequivalent

Next Steps

- Recheck process for effectiveness at three, six and twelve month interval
- Conduct a root cause analysis for no shows and cancellations

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Acknowledgments

Roberta K. Oka, RN, ANP, DNSc
Associate Chief of Nursing for Research
VA Palo Alto Health Care Systems

Roushig Kalebjian, MA
Student volunteer

Contact Information

Kelly Hautala, MS, MA, RN
Nurse Specialist, Patient Aligned Care Team
Email: Kelly.Hautala@va.gov

Enna E. Trevathan, DNP, RN, MSN, CNL, MBA
Ambulatory Care Clinic RN Manager
Email: Enna.Trevathan@va.gov