

It's Time to Teach Back: An Inter-professional Approach to Enhance Learning and Reduce Readmissions

Debra Peter MSN, RN, BC, CMSRN
Lehigh Valley Health Network, Debra.Peter@lvhn.org

Paula Robinson MSN, RN, BC
Lehigh Valley Health Network, Paula.Robinson@lvhn.org

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Debra Peter MSN, RN, BC, CMSRN, Paula Robinson, MSN, RN, BC
Lehigh Valley Health Network, Allentown, Pennsylvania

Background

According to the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI), one of the typical failures in health care education is the failure to ask clarifying questions related to the key learner's ability to understand and act on healthcare information. Failing to identify the key learner and cramming patient and family education into brief sessions at the time of discharge negatively impacts the safety and quality of patient outcomes.

What is Teach Back?

- Teach Back is an effective communication strategy used to evaluate learning.
- Teach Back strategies assess the key learner's knowledge, attitude, and the likelihood that behavioral changes may occur after discharge.
- Teach Back strategies place the burden of learning on the health care professional and not on the key learner.
 - "So that I know I did a good job teaching you, I will ask you a few questions."
 - "If you were talking to your neighbor this afternoon, what would you tell him we talked about today?"
 - "To make sure I covered all the key points on how to give an injection, I will ask you to show me the steps you will take when you give yourself your injection at home."

Project Design

- Formed an inter-professional work team made up of 10 health care clinicians from both the inpatient and outpatient environment.
- Collaborated with the Institute for Healthcare Improvement in an effort to reduce readmissions in high-leverage areas.
- Conducted a pilot study using a three-day integrated teach back process on an adult medical-surgical unit for individuals diagnosed with heart failure.



Methods

- Conducted small tests of change on pilot units using bedside PDSA cycles and LEAN methodologies.
- Created a standard work process using teach back strategies to provide more effective education encounters.
- Created and implemented network wide education for all health care professionals responsible for providing education to patients and families.
 - eLearning Training (1488 professionals)
 - Instructor Led "Train the Trainer" Workshops (137 professionals)
 - Performance validation of Teach Back Standard Work (all patient care units)
- Closely reviewed metrics related to documentation compliance of learner outcomes and hospital readmission rates for the heart failure population.

Hardwired Process on electronic Medication Administration Record

ID	Start	End	Time	Repeat	Medication	Dose	Unit	Rate	Unit	Rate	Route	St	Comm
13	U/Pend	6-APR11	1107		NSS	1000	mL	100	mL/HR	RX0104	IV	*	
14	U/Pend	6-APR11	1200		PENICILLIN V POTASSIUM	250	mg			RX06H	PO	*	
15	A/Prd	6-APR11	1200		NURSH-Teach Back Day 1	0				ONCE			
16	U/Pend	6-APR11	1400		HEPARIN SODIUM	5000	UNIT			RX06H	SQ	5,000 U	
17	U/Pend	6-APR11	1800		PENICILLIN V POTASSIUM	250	mg			RX06H	PO	*	
18	U/Pend	6-APR11	2107		NSS	1000	mL	100	mL/HR	RX0104	IV	*	
19	U/Pend	6-APR11	2200		HEPARIN SODIUM	5000	UNIT			RX06H	SQ	5,000 U	
20	U/Pend	6-APR11	2400		PENICILLIN V POTASSIUM	250	mg			RX06H	PO	*	

Teach Back Reference

Lehigh Valley Health Network
A PASSION FOR BETTER MEDICINE

Patient / Family Involvement
You or someone who cares for you knows how important it is to understand all of the information you get while you are in the hospital. The following questions have been written by the health care team to encourage you to take part in your care.

Teach Back Questions for Heart Failure

- During your hospital stay you will be asked the following questions. All of these questions are very important for you to understand and answer correctly if you or someone you care for has heart failure. Your answers to the questions will help us make sure that we did a good job explaining the important facts about your condition.
- Answer the questions using your own words. Do not worry about repeating what you have read or what your health care team has shared with you. We want to make sure that you understand what the questions mean and that you know what to do or who to call after you leave the hospital.

Day One Questions:

1. What is the name of your water pill?
2. What weight gain should you call your doctor about? Do you have a scale at home?
3. What foods should you avoid when you have heart failure?
4. What are your symptoms of heart failure?

Day Two Questions:

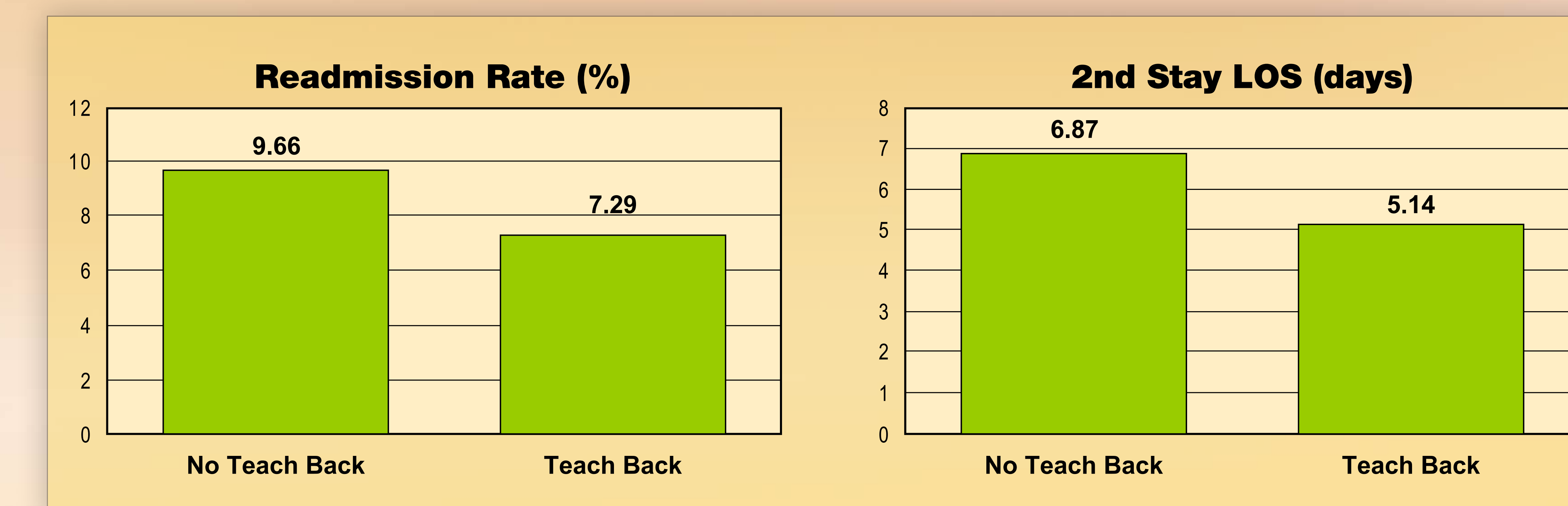
1. Why is it important to take your medicine for heart failure everyday?
2. Why is it important to avoid foods with sodium (salt)?
3. Why is it important to watch for the symptoms of heart failure?
4. Why is it important to watch for weight gain?

Day Three Questions:

1. How will you remember to take your water pill every day?
2. How do you plan to change to a low sodium (salt) diet?
3. How will you check for heart failure symptoms every day?
4. How will you weight yourself everyday?

Results

- The 30 day readmission rate and the length of stay days for readmissions were reduced for patients who received teach back as part of their educational encounter.
 - Over a three month period (July to September, 2010), 469 heart failure patients were evaluated
 - 180 patients received teach back
 - 289 patients did not receive teach back



Practice Implications

- Designing and implementing a comprehensive educational curriculum for clinical staff aimed at using teach back as a method to evaluate individual learning outcomes may impact patient and family satisfaction, improve hand over communication between disciplines and has the potential to decrease readmissions and the average length of stay in the hospital setting.
- Teach back is a general concept that can be applied to multiple disease states. Additional teach back modules are being developed for:
 - Anticoagulation
 - COPD
 - Stroke
 - Myocardial Infarction
 - Hypoglycemia
 - Community Acquired Pneumonia