

Data-Driven Outpatient Service: Guiding Safe, Effective, Efficient Practice Through Data Metrics

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Background

Community rehabilitation services provide short term, outpatient goal-directed therapy for patients at centre based sites or in their homes.

Various allied health professionals work in our community rehabilitation outpatient setting from the disciplines of physiotherapy, occupational therapy, dietetics, social work, speech pathology and allied health assistance.

We routinely service over 1400 patients annually in our program. These patients have a range of musculoskeletal, neurological and respiratory conditions.

In our large, busy outpatient rehabilitation program, demand for service frequently outstrips capacity for timely care.

Whilst meeting demand for service, we also need to maintain a high level of care that is both effective and meeting patient needs.

Objective

To describe the characteristics of targeted data metrics, collected in our multidisciplinary outpatient rehabilitation service, that has led to improvements in service provision to meet demand and provide high quality care.

Methods

A considerable amount of data is routinely collected in usual patient care as well as a significant amount that is required for service funding.

Despite consistently collecting this individual data, it was rarely analysed with a lens of improving efficiency, ensuring effectiveness, meeting demand and reducing waste.

Over several years we have identified a suite of key data metrics that when analysed can help guide patient care through our program.

Working with data analysts we have been able to tailor reports that are sent automatically to key staff at desired intervals.

These reports are analysed at population level. By analysing grouped data, we can identify bottlenecks early, address staffing needs to match demand across our locations and optimise the patient pathway through our program.

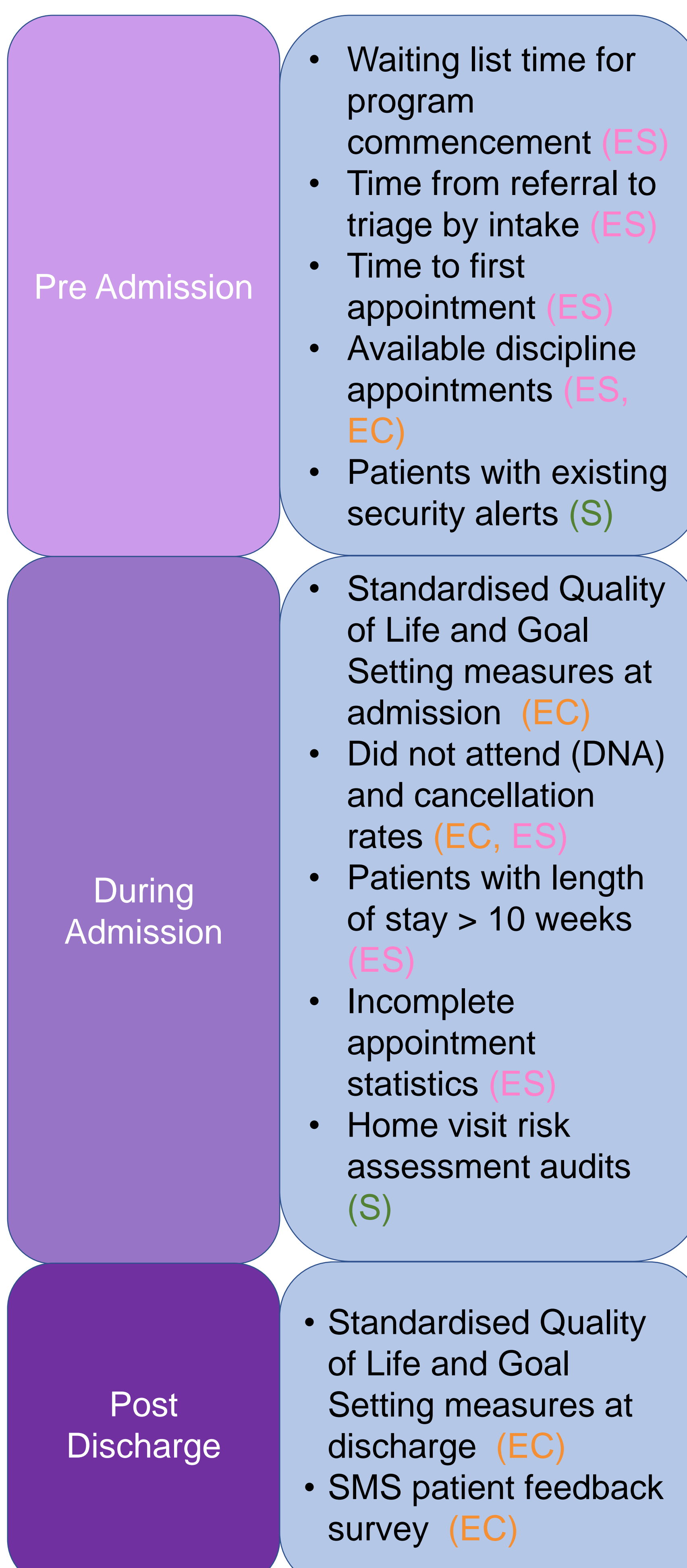
Results

A range of data reports are automatically received at key time intervals, either daily, weekly or monthly, as chosen by leaders.

The reports are categorised under 3 themes: Efficiency of Service, Effective Care and Safety.

Efficiency of Service (ES)	Effective Care (EC)	Safety (S)
Meeting Demand	Providing high quality and effective care	Ensuring staff and patient safety

Key reports analysed during a patient's journey through our program:



Discussion

Data is reviewed by leaders of the teams on a daily, weekly or monthly basis depending on the report's frequency.

Weekly data reports identify waiting lists, time to triage, available appointments and DNA rates. Long stay lists identify patients exceeding usual length of stay.

We address demand issues by aligning staffing with need across our teams, identifying disciplines with capacity to assist with interdisciplinary assessments and working with clinicians to address barriers to discharge.

Risk assessment audits, security reports and patient incomplete appointment statistic reports ensure we maintain compliance and safety and maximise funding.

Analysis of standardised quality of life and goal setting measures at a program level confirms we are maintaining high quality care.

SMS consumer feedback is sought at discharge, ensuring patient experience matches expectations and areas of improvement addressed as they arise.

Each report is analysed with key variables communicated back to staff through team huddles, meetings and email newsletters, as well as individually with clinicians where applicable.

Regular supervision sessions are a further opportunity to discuss key data metrics with team members and managers and identify opportunities for improvement in the care we provide.

Conclusion

By developing a suite of meaningful data metrics in our program, across the patient's journey, we have been able to improve patient flow, reduce waiting list times and address barriers to discharge whilst still maintaining the quality of care we provide.

Similar outpatient services could benefit from adapting this model, in using grouped key data metrics, to build efficiency, prove effectiveness and maintain safety within their own programs.

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