Creating a Flowchart

Name:

Institution

Introduction

Analysis of workflow in healthcare is essential in ensuring the effective utilization of resources and minimization of tasks that do not add value. This essay is a discussion of hospital appointment flowchart representing the workflow. A patient appointment is a common event that occurs regularly in my organization. This essay has provided a discussion on metrics used to measure the effectiveness of patient appointment workflow and a description of the areas of weakness.

Patient Appointment Flowchart

Patient Scheduling Appointment Workflow

Clerk/Provider

Patient in need of an appointment

Scheduler

Is patient new?

No → The Patient is searched in MRN system → Provider selection and the opening of an appointment → Selection of appointment type/reason

Yes → Creation of a new record in the system → Enter patient information

Next available appointment or specific data search

Select and save appointment slot(s)

Verbal summarization of appointment and issuing of appointment card
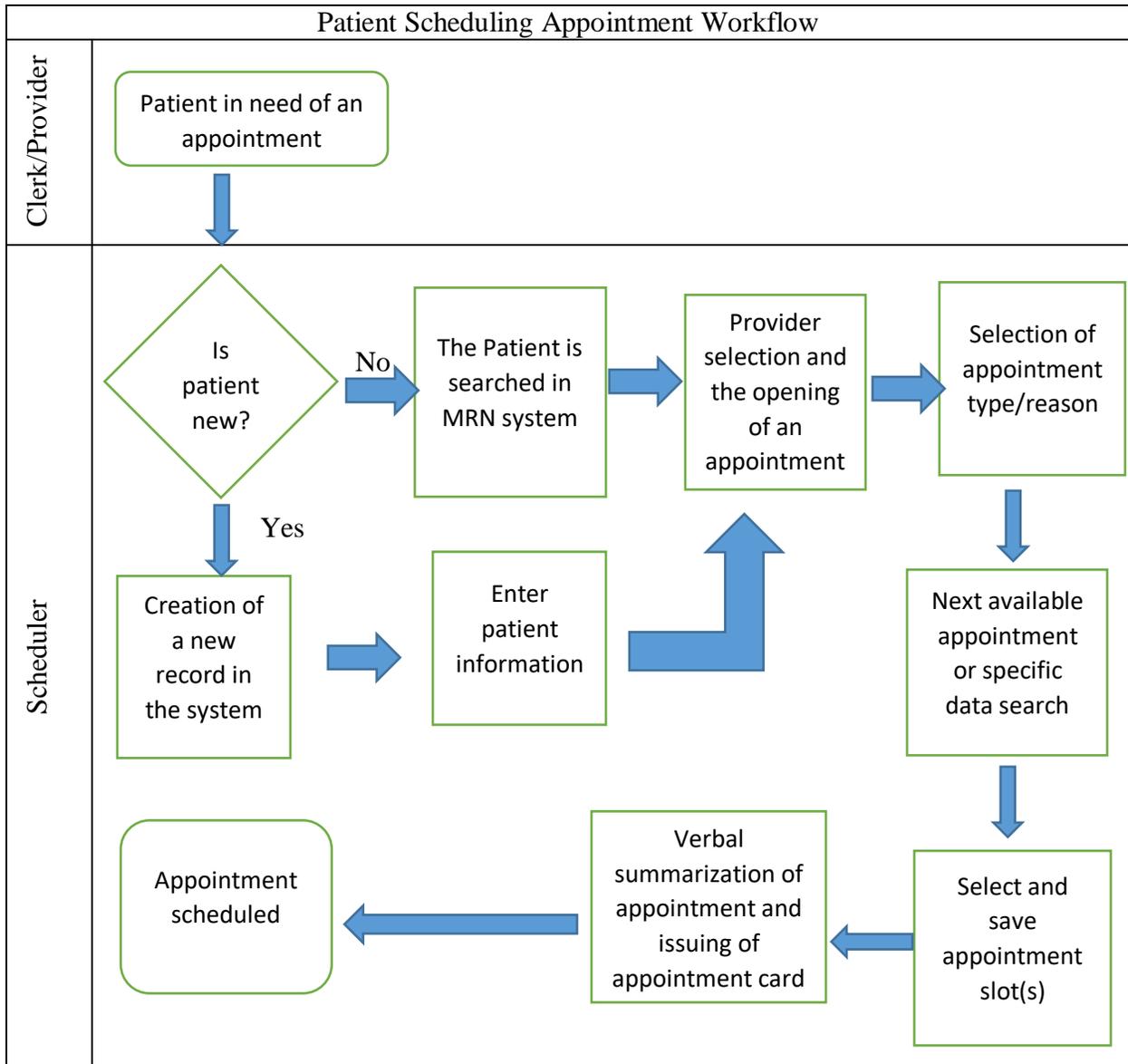
Appointment scheduled

Table 1: Patient Appointment Flowchart

The workflow for a patient visiting our healthcare facility begins with an intake portion of requesting for an appointment, registration of the patient, taking of a history, and beginning the clinical exam. Patients request for appointment in person for a walk-in the appointment or via phone call. The receptionist is responsible for collecting the patient's demographic data in both instances. The information includes age, date of birth, address, insurance provider information, emergency contact, and social security number. The schedule for new patients is a 45-minute appointment where they are provided with a unique patient identification number. Returning patients are retrieved, including their unique number and scheduled for a 20-minute appointment.

The file clerk develops a new paper chart after completion of registration and patient scheduled. The file clerk retrieves the existing paper record of a returning patient and updates the demographic information and places the chart containing the registration information in the pending chart bin. The paper chart is placed at the front desk by the file clerk a day before the patient arrives for an appointment so that it can be available upon patient's arrival.

The patient arrives for the appointment and the receptionist queries his or her social security number. The patient's identity is then verified with their first or last name. The demographic information is updated or validated in the registration system. Patients are provided with paper encounter forms that request information on reasons for the visit, current health concern, past medical history, that they fill while waiting for placement in an exam room. The nurse is informed of the patient's presence in the meantime.

Metrics Used to Measure the Effectiveness of the Workflow

Decreased Wait Times

The metrics used to measure workflow effectiveness in appointment include decreased wait times. Healthcare organizations receive a high volume of appointments, and patients often find themselves waiting in queues, which is frustrating and adds to the workload of the hospital staff. Patients take approximately 45 minutes on average to book an appointment. Reduced patient wait times indicate that the flowchart is effective.

Reduced Number of Missed Appointments

Medical clinics encounter about 10% average rate of missed appointments, situations that impact the organization's revenue and access to healthcare services. An effective workflow reduces the number of missed appointments. Reduced number of missed appointments is essential to promoting quality of care, maximizing effective use of resources, and reducing activities that do not add value.

The high attendance rate for physicians

Increased physician attendance rate indicates the effectiveness of the appointment flowchart. The rate of attendance is the proportion of the number of times patients consult their physician to the number of time they consult another doctor. Improved attendance rates translate to enhanced medical follow-ups (Cain & Haque, 2014). The accessibility of physicians by their patients as well as patient satisfaction with services offered increases the hospital's attendance rate.

Lightened administrative workload

An effective appointment workflow increases staff satisfaction by freeing them up in order to perform value-added tasks. A freed up workforce is an indicator of well-prepared

appointment workflow chat. The administrative workload reduces because the flowchart identifies repetitive tasks.

Areas of Improvement

Problems

The workflow in the appointment of patients has several challenges that require improvement. Patients in most cases complain that the process is time-consuming because their information has to be filled out and updated in the registration forms in the waiting room on their first arrival. The paper charts become lost or misplaced occasionally and personnel spends more time searching. Physicians also complain of the difficulties in reading the receptionist's handwriting that contribute to errors when transcribing orders.

Improvement

The patient appointment workflow can be improved by making huge differences in the accessibility of services through the implementation of innovative practices or integrating new technologies in the facility. The workflow can improve by increasing the use of providing online appointment booking instead of hiring new personnel to address the issue. The innovation will allow patients to use phones and the internet to make appointments at any time.

The number of missed appointments can be addressed by implementing reminders systems where the healthcare facility send a reminder and the patient sends a confirmation. The reminder will increase workflow effectiveness by reducing the risk of forgotten appointments while the confirmation allows the facility to free up time slots assigned to the patients canceling their appointments in advance (Hasvold & Wootton, 2011). The task of sending the reminders

and confirmations manually is repetitive and usually, time-consuming, and the best solution to this is automating the task for every scheduled appointment.

Physicians' attendance rates can be enhanced by providing patients with a family account that can be accessed online through the hospital's appointment booking portal. Patients can use the portal to view the availability of their physicians as well as see their appointment history. The hospital can also introduce a form that automates the process of requesting services (Aoun, 2017). Patients will only be required to fill the form when booking an appointment through the hospital's online portal and will be guided automatically to the right personnel for consultation. The portal can also be used to upload medical documents to lighten the administrative workload.

Summary

Analysis of workflow in healthcare is essential in ensuring the effective utilization of resources and minimization of tasks that do not add value. The patient appointment workflow is done manually by a receptionist. The metric used to determine the effectiveness of appointment flow include decreased wait time, reduced number of missed appointments, improved physician attendance rate, and lightened the administrative workload. The challenges of patient appointment workflow are those associated with manual handling of tasks and can be intervened by automating the patient appointment process.

Reference

Aoun, A. (2017). The challenges of medical clinic management. Retrieved from

  https://www.petalmd.com/blog/challenges-medical-clinic-management

Cain, C., & Haque, S. (2014). Organizational workflow and its impact on work quality.

Hasvold, P. E., & Wootton, R. (2011). Use of telephone and SMS reminders to improve

  attendance at hospital appointments: a systematic review. *Journal of telemedicine and*

  telecare, *17*(7), 358-364.