PCP Adherence to Specialist Advice in eConsult

The eConsultBASE™ service improves access to specialist care for patients by facilitating electronic communication between primary care providers (PCPs) and specialists.

We conducted a descriptive analysis based on a retrospective chart audit of 291 eConsults done between January 20, 2017 and August 31, 2017. Patients' charts were reviewed until 6 months after specialist response.

Less is known about primary care clinicians' actions following an eConsult, namely adherence to specialist advice and communication of results to patients. We reviewed patient charts to assess if the primary care clinician implemented the specialist's advice and if, how, and when the PCP communicated the results to the patient.

Results

Primary care clinicians adhered to specialist advice in 82% of cases. Adherence ranged from 62% to 93% across recommendation categories.

Most common question categories:
- 63% Diagnosis
- 27% Management
- 10% Drug Treatment
- 1% Procedures

Median time to communication after specialist response was 5 days, and 90% of patients were contacted within 46 days.

A face-to-face visit took place for 50% of patients within 13 days.

50% of patients who were informed via a telephone call, voice mail or the patient portal got their results within 2 days.

We found evidence that the primary care clinicians communicated the eConsult results to patients in 79% of cases.

Method of clinician-patient communication after eConsult:
- Face-to-face visit with PCC: 38.0%
- Telephone call by PCC: 32.0%
- Telephone call by nurse: 19.0%
- e-Mail via patient portal: 9.0%
- Other*: 2.0%

*Telephone call by a clerk (2 cases), face-to-face contact with a nurse (1 case), unclear which method was used (2 cases).

The eConsult service delivers specialist advice that is:
- Actionable by primary care clinicians
- Communicated in a timely fashion
- Valuable to the delivery of prompt, high-quality care


Contact: Dr. Clare Liddy, cliddy@uottawa.ca

www.ChamplainBASEeConsult.com