

Emergency Department Boarding and Crowding Working Group

June 19, 2024 | 3:00-4:00pm

Meeting Minutes

Members present: John Brancato, Barbara Cass, Phil Davis, Charles Dike, Dock Fox, Lisa Freeman, Daniel Freess, Michael Holmes, Jennifer Martin, Chris Moore, Anumeha Singh

Members absent: Greg Allard, Jonathan Bankoff, Matt Barrett, John Brancato, Lara Chepenik, Rebekah Heckmann, Beth Liebhardt, Renee Malaro, Miriam Miller, Craig Mittleman, Mag Morelli, Mairead Painter, Phillip Roland, Greg Shangold

Introduction

- Chris Moore called the meeting to order at 3:00pm.
- Approve the minutes – Charles Dike motioned, and Michael Holmes seconded.

Acknowledge June 19

- Chris acknowledged the history of June 19th.

Frontline Experience / Story

- Lisa Freeman, Connecticut Center for Patient Safety, spoke about caring for her husband until his death, and how that informed her role as a patient advocate in the state.
- Chris shared a recent experience working in the A side of the emergency department and caring for a patient in the hallway, who had an invasive tumor in the spine. He hopes to have members share their stories at each meeting to help remain patient centered.

Update on Conversation with CHA

- Chris recapped a meeting that he had with CHA last week alongside other members of the working group.
- Michael framed the meeting as an opportunity to clear the air between CHA and the working group, and that the working group hopes to continue to work with CHA going forward.

Bobby Redwood, MD – Presentation and Q&A

- Chris introduced Bobby Redwood, MD, MPH, FACEP.
 - Dr. Redwood is an Emergency and Preventative Medicine Physician, and has a leadership role at ACEP, the American College of Emergency Physicians in the Quality Improvement Patient Safety Section.
- Dr. Redwood highlighted that ED boarding is a public health issue that poses a significant risk to patient safety and hospital quality. Dr. Redwood views boarding as highly preventable if appropriately measured with system-level responses.

- Dr. Redwood compared emergency departments to restaurants - EDs are not designed to board patients.
- Public health issues and patient safety risks of *crowding* include patients who leave without being seen, undifferentiated patient risk, worsening pathology risk, diagnostic error risk, care error risk, and infection control.
- Public health issues and patient safety risks of *boarding* include staff that are not trained for inpatient care, less access to specialized equipment, the lack of appropriate policies and procedures for care in the ED, more frequent ED handoffs and less frequent ED assessments. This exponentially compounds the risks from crowding.
- Clinicians often think about the mission case of addressing the boarding crisis – physicians want better outcomes, and satisfied patients. On the business side, the patients that leave without being make up a large pool of potential money, the ACO bonuses and penalties costs money, and staff retention and risk management is also harmful to a hospital’s finances.
- Dr. Redwood framed the emergency department as the tragedy of the commons, where the ED is a public or shared resource that is pushed beyond its capacity.
- He shared a sample emergency department a high-capacity plan with three status levels: yellow, red, and black.
- Dr. Redwood offered some quality improvement considerations, including flagging patients at highest risk for ED boarding harm, building out a capacity plan and running drills, offer help to bottle-necks in the system such as mental health and long-tern care.
- Chris will share Dr. Redwood’s slides with the group.

Subgroup Updates

- Quality measures – the group met once in June and will have more updates to come.
- Solutions and discharge subgroups – Anu has a meeting scheduled with Melissa Riley to discuss the conservatorship issue.
 - Chris brought up Medicaid payment reform as an issue that Greg Shangold was interested in.

Actions and Agenda for Next Meeting

- As an action item, Chris is looking ahead to the group’s end-of-year report to the legislature – he encouraged members to write down recommendations or solutions that they are interested in, so that the report can be collaborative and successful.