

The Benefits of Root Cause Analysis

Whenever a readmission or emergency department (ED) visit occurs, a complete root cause analysis (RCA) should be completed to determine if the ED visit or readmission could have been prevented.

The RCA helps to identify trends, such as:

- Identifying the specific physician who sends patients to ED
 - Does the physician have clinical concerns with the staff?
 - Does the physician know the clinical capabilities of the staff?
 - How is the registered nurse presenting the case to the physician (SBAR utilization)?
 - Is it an on-call physician covering?
- Patients with one or more chronic conditions
 - Is education needed for the patient and/or family?
 - Is there a need of disease-specific clinical upskilling of staff?
- Identifying which home health staff or agency is sending the most patients to ED
- Additional after-hours management/staffing
- Needed community resources
- Issues with a specific nursing staff, unit, or shift

If any trends are identified, they should be shared as soon as possible with all involved to ensure they can be appropriately addressed and the needed education or actions implemented.

Many support services are available as a resource for Highmark members. These include nurses who are part of the Enhanced Community Care Management (ECCM) team. These nurses are embedded in primary care and specialists' offices and at some community hospitals. They provide extra support to patients who are dealing with one or more chronic conditions.

Another resource is Aspire, the nation's largest provider of non-hospice, community-based palliative care. These services are provided at no cost to Highmark Medicare Advantage members.

If you have any question about completing a root a cause analysis or coordinating resources for a patient, please contact your regional Network Performance Manager.

Aspire Health is a separate and independent company that provides support services to Highmark members.

HMHCS is an independent company that provides post-acute care network management services for Highmark Blue Shield and some of Highmark's affiliated Blue health plans. As part of those services, HMHCS is sharing the information contained in this newsletter on behalf of Highmark Blue Shield. Highmark Blue Shield and its affiliated Blue health plans are independent licensees of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association.