

Readmissions NEWS

A Long-Term Care Facility Slashes Readmission Rates by Accessing Its Residents' Full Medical Records

Absolut Care had zero readmissions in Q1 2018, thanks in part to accessing their patient's complete records HealthlinkNY Health Information Exchange

by Staci Romeo

Reducing the number of preventable hospital readmissions within 30 days is one of the biggest goals in healthcare quality. It's also one of the hardest to reach.

So, it was quite an achievement when Absolut Care, a 160-bed rehabilitation and skilled nursing facility, had **zero** readmissions in the first quarter of 2018—especially since the facility had a 23% readmissions rate for the first half of 2017.

"A lot of good things have to happen to get to zero," explained Jim Shadduck, Administrator at Absolut Care in Endicott, New York. "You have to have the right systems in place, and residents to who can recover without returning to the hospital for care."

You also need to be able to access a patient's medical records quickly, and the most efficient way to do that is through data on the Health Information Exchange (HIE). In this case, Shadduck says his organization relied heavily on HealthlinkNY, the HIE that services his company's region.

(continued on page 2)

In This Issue

- 1 A Long-Term Care Facility Slashes Readmission Rates by Accessing Its Residents' Full Medical Records
- 1 Patients as Partners in the Last Mile of Healthcare: Towards a Hospital Discharge Quality Guarantee
- 5 Kidney Disease Patients Can Benefit from Home Support
- 6 Thought Leaders' Corner
- 9 Industry News
- 12 Catching Up With...
Matt Miller PhD

Patients as Partners in the Last Mile of Healthcare: Towards a Hospital Discharge Quality Guarantee

by Ben Rosner, MD, PhD

The last mile of healthcare, the vulnerable period of time up to 90 days post-discharge – when it is estimated that as many as 34% of Medicare beneficiaries are readmitted¹ – has long been a challenge for the U.S. healthcare system. If healthcare operated like any other industry, such a high "failure rate" might have prompted a "product recall" long ago. Certainly, however, healthcare is not a manufacturing assembly line. It is, at its core, about people. And associated with people comes great nuance and complexity.

But should healthcare not adopt best practices from other industries wherever possible? Should we not by now be on the road towards a post-discharge "quality guarantee," in which we have enough confidence in our discharge processes to stand behind such a "radical" assurance? Just as New York University received great publicity with its landmark announcement of free tuition for medical students,² so too will some future hospital or healthcare system when it is ready to disrupt healthcare with such a discharge guarantee.

(continued on page 3)