

Blood Pressure Program Empowers Patients



New blood pressure cuffs ready for check-out

Funding supports new equipment and patient empowerment

What if you were told that you might have high blood pressure (BP), and there was a way for you to track it at home to make sure that this was the case? Home Blood Pressure monitoring supports an accurate diagnosis, as well as medication and lifestyle management. However, many patients do not have access to a home blood pressure monitoring device.

High Blood Pressure is common among patients at Family HealthCare (Fargo, ND). In order to help with accurate diagnosis of hypertension for our providers, and to empower patients to monitor their blood pressure at home, Family HealthCare Clinical Pharmacist Brody Maack partnered with PartnerSHIP 4 Health (PS4H) to offer a Self-Measured Blood Pressure Monitoring Loaner program.

PS4H offered Blood Pressure Devices, funding, and resources to support Maack as he:

- reviewed best practices
- created a cleaning and re-lending policy
- developed a referral system

Family HealthCare Clinical and Management Staff were asked to identify people who could benefit from monitoring their blood pressure between visits to the clinic. Patients with a high blood pressure reading but not diagnosed with high blood pressure, as well as those with a diagnosis of high blood pressure who have trouble managing their blood pressure, are especially good candidates for the program.

Collaborative management key to patient health

In order to establish this new program at Family HealthCare, Maack partnered with pharmacy student interns to craft the policies and protocols, and collaborated with Fargo-Moorhead (F-M) Ambulance Community Paramedics (FMACP) to brainstorm ideas as to how we can work together to improve the care of hypertension patients.

As part of the loaner program, patients are instructed on the use of home BP monitors, encouraged to consider lifestyle changes, offered medication education as applicable, and sometimes referred to the dietitian for additional lifestyle and nutrition education. Providers at FHC are utilizing this referral-based service, which has also lead to collaboration with the clinical pharmacist in regards to medication therapy management.

Maack reports that the loaner program has already had an impact on Family HealthCare's patients. "Since the implementation of the program, we have identified several patients previously undiagnosed with hypertension, and were able to help them receive the appropriate treatment to reach their blood pressure goals. In addition, we have helped patients identify additional lifestyle methods to lower their blood pressure, and connect them with services like FMACP to receive in-home education and support."

Partnering with PS4H has enabled FHC to intentionally engage patients in self-management activities, which in turn helps keep patients at home, out of the hospital and emergency departments, as well as improve individual patient outcomes.

Learn more about PartnerSHIP 4 Health's work in Becker, Clay, Otter Tail and Wilkin counties at <http://partnership4health.org>

January 2017
Family HealthCare

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