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Important Message from Medicare: A New Delivery Process

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Important Message from Medicare: A New Delivery Process

Norene Chavez, RN, BS

**Situation:** All admission staff, Health Unit Coordinators (HUC), and Quality Resource (QR) nurses must be aware of the process for delivery and signature of the Important Message from Medicare (IMM) to patients on Medicare at St. Cloud Hospital (SCH). All patients must have the IMM presented to them for signature on admission to SCH and receive a follow up copy no sooner than 48 hours prior to discharge. If discharged within 48 hours, no follow up copy required.

**Background:** The Center for Medicare/Medicaid Services (CMS) requires the IMM to be presented to patients for signature on admission to SCH. A follow up copy must be delivered within 48 hours of discharge. Hospitals must document delivery and demonstrate compliance. In April 2011, CMS requires the time to be noted on the delivery of the IMM.

**Assessment:** An audit of documentation of delivery of the follow up copy of the IMM demonstrated lack of complete compliance to this requirement. See Figure A.

**Recommendation:** A team of QR nurses and HUCs reviewed current practice in place for determining which patients require the IMM and guidelines for delivery of the IMM and proposed changes to the current model. The team will update the changes to the current guidelines and communicate the changes to admission staff, QR nurses and HUCs at SCH. The team will have the changes in the process and will have communicated to involved staff by Feb 4, 2013. The team will identify targets and timelines.

**Process Change**

The team decided to change the process to have HUCs document the delivery of the IMM in Epic rather than the QR nurse document delivery. This is to take place in the activities area under letters.

**Do**

Live educational session for HUCs provided in January 2013 prior to implementation of the new process.

**Check**

QR nurses checking Epic documentation and providing feedback and education to HUCs when necessary. An audit of compliance of requirement demonstrates improvement. See Figure B.

**Act**


**Team**

Improvement Team Members:
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**Figure A:** SCH QR IMM Delivery Success Rate (Pre)

**Figure B:** SCH QR IMM Delivery Success Rate (Post)