

QI Evaluation of EPIC Social Determinant Screening Wheel

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Background

Social determinants of health (SDOH) screening in emergency departments (ED) is a promising method to capture and address the individualized social needs of a broad patient population, ideally lowering emergency department readmissions while reducing health disparities

- Individual-level income, housing, employment, and education can contribute to predictions of 30-day readmissions into EDs and housing stability.

With new Joint Commission guidelines requiring social determinants to be addressed and the integration of SDOH-related Z-codes into ICD-10 coding, we must implement robust screening and referral programs.

Methods

We investigated current best practice screening tools and their integration with electronic health records (EHRs) in similar hospital settings across the country. This was accomplished by:

- Conducting a descriptive literature review to identify a representative number of works relating to current SDOH screening practices in EDs.

These works:

- Explored past and current practices related to ED SDOH screening and interventions.

We divided the papers into the following categories:

- Current tested screening tools, integration with EHRs, a discussion of survey formats, referrals and resource navigation, and a final section describing care connection models from screening to referral.

Current Screening Policies

Currently at UMC, patients in the ED are screened for SDOH using the Epic Wheel, a built-in feature that helps document social, behavioral, and economic information that is pertinent to the patient's health.

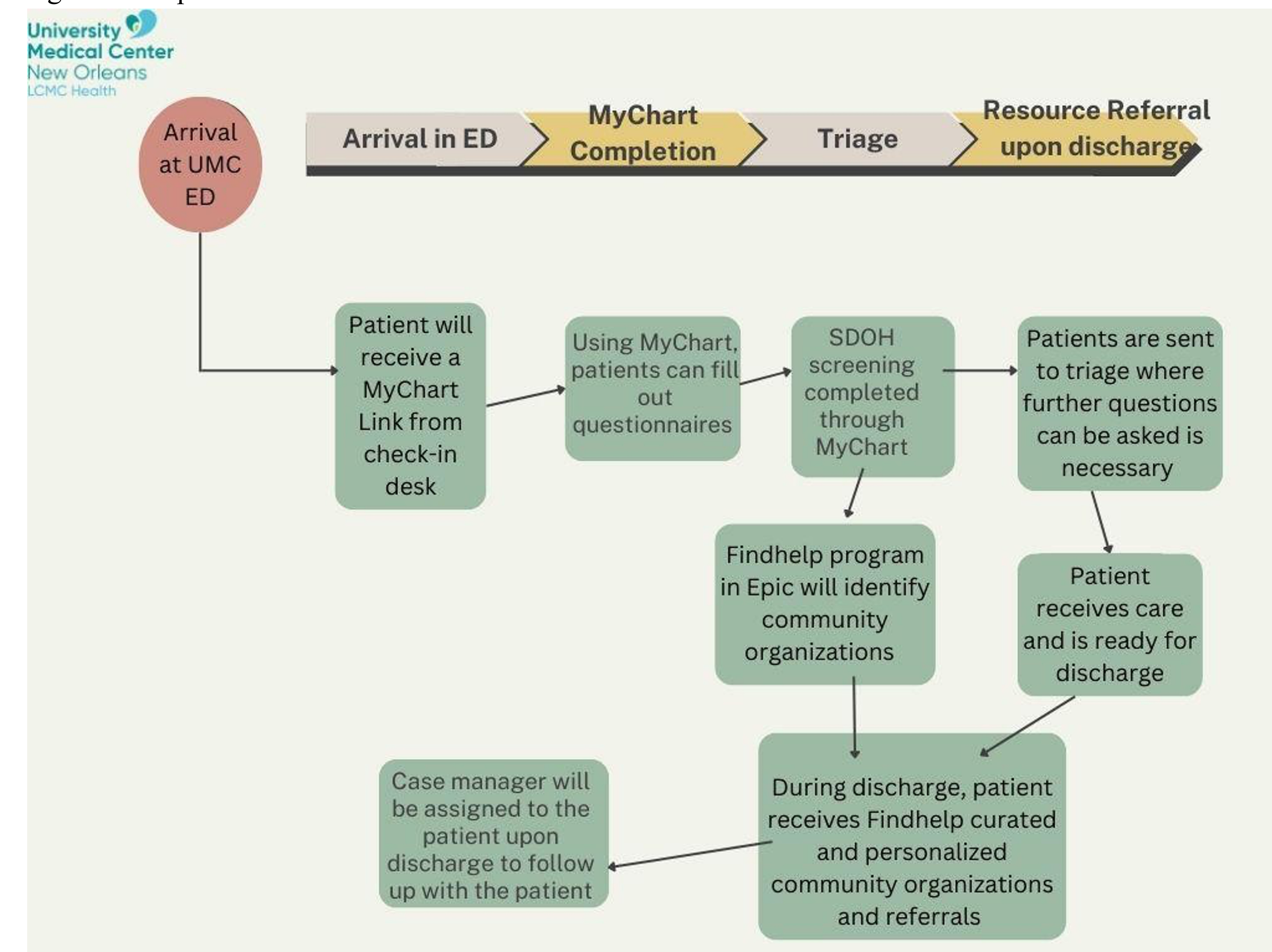
- However, feedback from ED nurses, physicians, and triage personnel showed that time constraints and questions about the utility of such screening were the biggest barriers that health professionals faced in effectively using the Epic Wheel.

Literature Review Findings

Table 1 Top Ranked Screening Programs

Top Ranked Screening Programs
Urban Life Stressors
PRAPARE
Social Needs Checklist
Survey of Well-Being of Young Children
Safe Environment for Every Kid
WeCare
Health Leads Screening Tool
Accountable Health Communities (AHC)
HealthBegins Upstream Risks

Figure 1: Proposed intervention at UMC



Results

Key results include:

- Identification of the nine top ranked screening programs (Table 1)
- Electronic screening led to higher levels of social needs reporting compared to paper counterparts
- The importance referrals given by designated resource navigator personnel
- The importance of high-quality, written resource referrals in reducing social risk factors

Lastly, challenges identified included loss to follow-up, even in a transition care coordination model that assists patients throughout levels and types of care.

Conclusions

These best practices uncovered by the review will be utilized to inform the implementation of a SDOH screening program in the Emergency Department of University Medical Center, New Orleans. Our proposal includes the integration of a program called FindHelp into Epic. FindHelp uses a unique platform to connect patients to local resources and programs aimed at addressing specific social needs found through screening, demonstrated in Figure 1.

This screening and referral program is currently being rolled out at UMC, with the hopes of

- a more effective method to connect individual patients to services
- a method to gather metrics from the screening survey to inform ED staff of community members' needs and lower emergency department readmissions and reduce health disparities.

QR Code to Abstract and References

