



An Innovative Approach to Giving the Homeless What They Want from Health Care

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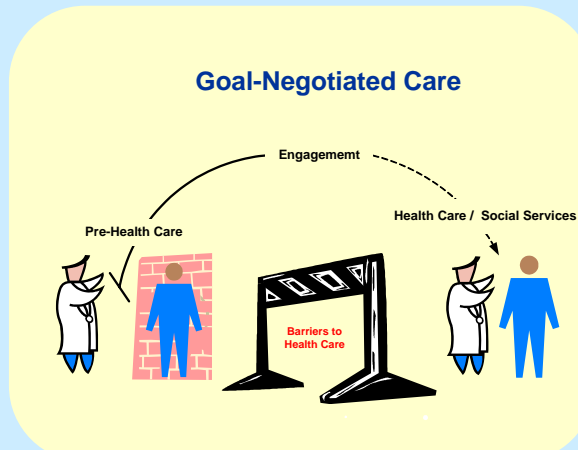
THE STUDY: Descriptive study of medical outreach to the urban street homeless

Statement of the Problem

- Engaging homeless people in health-care services is very difficult
- Problem-based model uses provider-defined agenda
- Homeless patients are alienated and isolated
- Many often avoid seeking health care

Method

- Used PDAs to track street patients over 2 years
- Used goal-negotiated care (GNC) to describe and direct the care process for patients
- Performed content and frequency analysis of demographics, goals, and encounters



Conclusion

- GNC shifts the health-care paradigm to solution-oriented approach
- New framework allows provider to help patients overcome barriers
- GNC attempts to impact patient self-efficacy
- Focus on patients' context and expectancies enhances engagement
- Overcoming barriers can improve treatment and program adherence

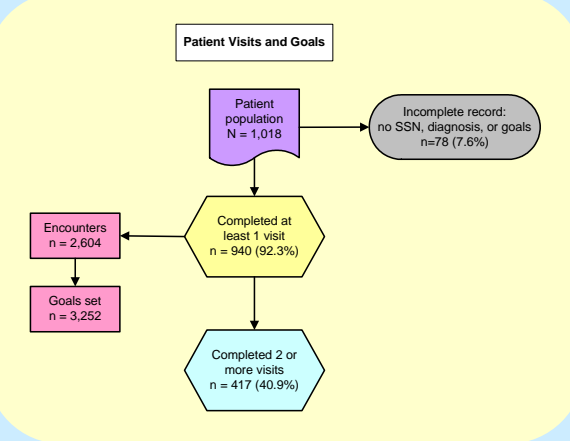
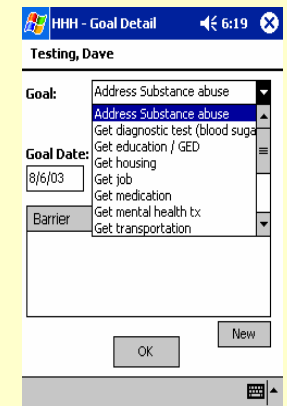
THE PROGRAM: Innovative use of PDAs and GNC

Problem

- Follow patients in diverse settings:
 - Soup kitchens
 - Under bridges and overpasses
 - Shelters
- Copious amounts of paper records carried around in a suitcase
- No systematic way to share records
- Duplication of patient files

Solution

- Custom-designed, hand-held computer-prompted GNC program
- Software parallels clinical encounter



Number and Proportion of Goals Recorded for Patients					
Goal Category	Main Category	# Goals	% Goals	Patients with Goals	% Persons
Make/keep appointments	Engagement	940	28.9	452	49.9
FU/Return appointments	Engagement	602	18.5	374	41.3
Indigent insurance card	Pre-health care	238	7.3	169	18.7
Glucose, BP, pregnancy tests	Health care	226	6.9	160	17.7
Medical tx	Health care	218	6.7	153	16.9
Obtain/refill Rx	Health care	212	6.5	115	12.7
Graduate, improve life	Social services	156	4.8	109	12.0
Substance abuse tx, quit smoking	Health care	147	4.5	90	9.9
Identification	Pre-health care	121	3.7	78	8.6
Therapy, inpatient psychiatric tx	Health care	109	3.4	66	7.3
Bus tokens, food stamps	Social services	99	3.0	61	6.7
Housing, shelter, day bed	Social services	75	2.3	60	6.6
Transportation	Social services	61	1.9	31	4.0
Employment	Social services	43	1.3	36	3.4
Birth certificate	Pre-health care	5	0.2	4	0.4
TOTALS		3252		1958	



Results

- More efficient history taking
- Direction about goal negotiation
- Providers satisfied with platform
- Patients comfortable with and flattered by "high-tech" methods

What's next?

- Formal staff training
- Standardization of data collection/entry
- Evaluation of patient health outcomes
- Comparative trial of PDA-driven GNC model to standard-of-care