

AACVPR Case Study: Massachusetts General Hospital

Title: Referral of Patient to External Cardiac Rehabilitation Program

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Motivation and Operations

1. What was your motivation for implementing these changes in your program?

As a tertiary hospital, often patients referred to our cardiac rehabilitation (CR) Program prefer a CR Program closer to their home. Additionally, with the implementation of an electronic medical record (EMR), the volume of these referrals increased and there was a need for an efficient process to facilitate these referrals to “external” CR Programs.

2. How long did it take to implement these changes?

Within 1 month, we had created the referral form as well as a database of state-wide CR Program phone and fax numbers. To assist with locating out of state CR Programs, we utilize the online [AACVPR Program Directory](#). You can also use the [CDC Interactive Atlas of Heart Disease and Stroke](#) (see supplemental material for how to find CR programs in the United States using the CDC Interactive Atlas of Heart Disease and Stroke).

3. What staffing changes did you have to make in order to achieve these changes?

No staffing changes were required. We utilized a student intern to develop the database of state-wide CR Programs and pertinent contact info (name of program, address, phone, fax, Program Director name)

Reflection on Process

4. What worked well?

Speaking directly with the patient to identify a more convenient option for CR and then faxing a referral form to that local CR Program is efficient.

5. What were the opportunities for improvement?

Prior to implementation of this process, a formal communication to outside CR Programs may have been beneficial to inform them of the process and their role in managing the referral of the patient.

6. How long have you been implementing these changes?

This process has been in place for 1 year.

Future/Next Steps

7. Do you anticipate making any changes in the future to your current process?

As indicated in question #5, we now fax our referral form with a cover letter that outlines the next steps to be taken to bring the patient to his/her first CR appointment (see supplemental materials for the fax cover sheet).

8. Do you have any supplemental materials you would be willing to share?

- [How to Find Cardiac Rehabilitation Programs in the United States Using the CDC Interactive Atlas of Heart Disease and Stroke](#)
- [Massachusetts General Hospital Fax Cover Sheet for External Cardiac Rehabilitation Referrals](#)
- [Massachusetts General Hospital Cardiac Rehabilitation Referral Form](#)