

Closing the Prep Gap: A Tech-Based Approach to Improving Colonoscopy Readiness

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Abstract Background Information: Outpatient colonoscopy practices with high rates of case cancellations and no-shows face operational challenges requiring attention. Many patients cite forgotten appointments, lack of rides home, or work constraints as barriers to care. Even when patients arrive for appointments there is an inconsistent adherence to preparation instructions that threaten the success of the intended procedure. An additional challenge is encountered when the patient population is largely open-access patients, who unlike other surgical patients, do not have an office visit preempting their visit to our Endoscopy suite.

Objectives of Project: This project incorporates a technology-based solution to deliver automated text messages to colonoscopy patients to improve their colonoscopy preparation and appointment adherence. Customized message reminders are triggered at certain milestones to put the most essential information at the patients' fingertips. The ColoPrep program provides a series of automated message reminders beginning 21 days ahead of the scheduled colonoscopy. Reminders ranging from appointment date, prompts to plan transportation, links to medication instructions, checklists of supplies required for the prep, diet tips, and guidance of when to consume the bowel prep.

Process of Implementation: The first tier of communication is a pre-set script, if questions remain, the patient can engage with the technology via text to receive additional real-time support. Depending on the content of their question, their message will be routed to nurses in the GI clinic (if related to scheduling, appointment timing, prescriptions, etc.) or to the front-line endoscopy nursing staff (if related to diet or colonoscopy prep questions). The two nursing teams were trained by their respective leadership teams on how and when to monitor the patient inquiries.

Statement of Successful Practice: A collaborative model between the GI practice and Endoscopy nursing teams was key to the success of this implementation, as both teams own a branch of this workflow. Leveraging technology and available nursing resources to share essential information to ensure patient questions are addressed in a timely manner with ease.

Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing: This initiative demonstrates how technology and interdisciplinary collaboration can enhance patient readiness, reduce cancellations, and improve procedural outcomes. It highlights the evolving role of perianesthesia nurses in patient education, digital engagement, and care coordination.