

## Importance of Value Based Treatment Plans

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English Composition 2

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December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022

### **Importance of Value Based Treatment Plans**

Doctors play a significant role in our road to recovery after experiencing trauma. Do you ever feel like your doctor does not listen to your needs and feels he recommends the same treatment to everyone? The way treatment plans are developed can have a positive or negative impact on your recovery. Developing treatment plans based on patient progress promotes healing as doctors work together towards a common goal of patient recovery. However, many believe treatment plans based on patient progress are unethical as they neglect the patient's personal goals and mistrust physical therapists. Discussing treatment plans that promote patient progress will caution that it cannot be assumed that value-based treatment plans based on patient progress will have the same outcomes for everyone. Further, it supports patient healing as physical therapists measure patient improvement and result in understanding aspects of their patient's treatment that need improvement. Finally, value-based treatment plans save practices money by screening patients before providing services, as different patients need more or less treatment based on their condition.

Implementing value-based treatments promotes patient healing. Utilizing the direct-to-employer service instead of going through third-party payment allows for more efficient and better treatment. Dealing directly with employers instead of third-party payment allows faster treatment and more patient care. Worth (2022) explains, "Instead of limiting services to what the insurance company allows, we can provide the type of care, the level of care, and the duration of care we feel is best for the patient and their outcomes and goals." (p.44) By no longer dealing with insurance companies saves the practice money and time as they need less administrative work for authorizations. Implementing value-based treatment also reduces healthcare spending as they can save on testing if a patient does not require additional testing. Worth (2022) explains,

"Ultimately, what it's all about is early access to high-quality care that prevents further injury and decreases overall health care costs. With this model — with value-based care — everything begins and ends with the patient." (p.44) Implementing Merit-based Incentive Payment System will allow patients to see the value in their treatment plans.

Advanced Alternative Payment Models or the Merit-based Incentive Payment System where physical therapists collect and report the cost and outcome of their services to demonstrate the value of their care. Physical therapists that utilize MIPS to gather cost and outcome measures say the transition to MIPS was uncomplicated. In this model, payment is related to the outcome of patient care delivered. Physical therapists must collect and report the cost and outcome data to indicate the significance of their care. Alice Bell PT, DPT, explains, "We have to start looking at quality and outcomes, because it's the right thing to do for patients. But it is also about the economics of health care. To continue to just pay and pay for services without understanding whether those services actually bring value — that model is unsustainable." (Hayhurst, 2022, p.44-45) Merit-based Incentive Payment models where the quality of care and efficiency are essential, it is imperative to measure potential risk in understanding all patient outcomes. Measuring patient progress allows practices to either earn more or less money if the patient hits or fails to meet specific benchmarks. Josh Bailey PT, DPT, of Rehab Associates of Central Virginia explains, "To succeed in value-based care, you have to really measure outcomes, you can't just kind of measure outcomes; and you have to really measure costs, and not just when it's convenient or conducive." (Hayhurst, 2022, p.45) Measuring patient progress and outcomes allows physical therapists to understand what aspects of the patient's treatment need improvement. Screening patients before delivering services improves patient outcomes while reducing future costs by assessing those at risk. Providing value-based care leads to a more

sustainable future as the entire staff of the physical therapy office works together to provide recovery by utilizing an outcomes-measure system. The "Triple Aim" that providers strive to enhance the patient's health care experience, improve population health, and reduce the per capita cost of health care is achieved with a value-based payment model. Physical therapists recording patient data and potential outcomes receive a 5 percent bonus for hitting their benchmarks. Physical therapists have an incentive to help their patients in their recovery as they are rewarded for their demanding work.

In "The Strategy That Will Fix Healthcare" by Michael E. Porter and Thomas H. Lee, the authors explain how implementing value-based healthcare provides better, more effective, cost-efficient treatment to patients. The author intends to change how institutions deliver care and create treatment plans based on the patient's condition. Organizing into Integrated Practice Units (IPUs) ensures patients achieve the best care and complete recovery as doctors work together to provide the best quality treatment as efficiently as possible. Before IPUS, patients were referred to various doctors for additional testing. Each interaction was separate, and no one measured patient outcomes, which resulted in higher care costs and lower value longer care. Virginia Mason's Spine Clinic utilizes IPU, and patients have benefitted from this practice. "Patients miss fewer days of work (4.3 versus 9 per episode) and need fewer physical therapy visits (4.4 versus 8.8). In addition, the use of MRI scans to evaluate low back pain has decreased by 23% since the clinic's launch in 2005, even as outcomes have improved." (Porter, Lee, 2013, p.54) Different patients require several types of care and services, and providing services tailored to the patient's needs improves the value and results more measurable. Outcomes should be gauged based on the patient's condition, and products should include the complete care process for the need and tracking of the patient's well-being after comprehensive treatment. Michael E. Porter explains the

importance of measuring patient outcomes through three different tiers, and each presents the steps to recovery. Tier one, the patient states what level of health they wish to achieve. Tier two is the length and discomfort of recovery treatment. Tier 3 outcome relates to the sustainability of the patient's health. Measuring potential effects helps patient care and save cost. Suppose patients improve during tier one. Less treatment is necessary for tier two or three of treatment and recovery. Measuring a complete set of patient outcomes is essential to improving their recovery and value.

Measuring value means tracking the expenses for the patient's entire treatment plan. The cost of the treatment plan is then compared to the outcome achieved. The method used to understand these costs is TDABC, and when applied, it helps providers find ways to reduce costs without impacting potential results. "Providers are achieving savings of 25% or more by tapping opportunities such as better capacity utilization, more-standardized processes, better matching of personnel skills to tasks, locating care in the most cost-effective facility, and many others." (Porter, Lee, 2013, pg.59) Healthcare organizations need knowledge of care costs and cost-related outcomes to improve care. Clinicians no longer argue over arbitrary cuts; they can work together to enhance the value of care provided. Adopting a bundled payment approach is the best, as payment is connected to patient care while improving outcomes. Bundled payment models also hold providers responsible for complications and reporting effects. "In Germany, bundled payments for hospital inpatient care—combining all physician fees and other costs, unlike payment models in the U.S.— have helped keep the average payment for a hospitalization below \$5,000, (compared with more than \$19,000 in the U.S., even though hospital stays are, on average, 50% longer in Germany). Among the features of the German system are care guarantees under which the hospital bears responsibility for the cost of rehospitalization related to the

original care." (Porter, Lee, 2013, p. 60) With bundle payments, patients not only receive better value care at a lower cost but also holds physicians responsible for their care.

In "Value-based competition in health care's ethical drawbacks and the need for a values-driven approach," authors A. Stef Groenewoud, Gert P. Westert, and Jan A. M. Kremer explain their opposition to value-based healthcare models. (VBHC) The authors argue that a value-based healthcare model is not ethical. The authors argue, "Although it is widely believed that VBHC contributes to more efficient clinical pathways, a focus on relevant outcomes, cost awareness, and transparency, evidence of its effectiveness is still scarcely available." (Groenewoud, et al., 2019, p.1) However, research indicates that there is evidence that VBHC models proved to be successful as there are faster recovery rates, and costs have seen a significant drop.

Groenewoud et al.,(2019) argue that too VBHC definition of 'value' that their definition means something was placing priority over another. The authors argue that VBHC's value definition neglects the patient's personal goals. The authors express their dissatisfaction with the tier system proposed by Michael Porter by stating, "Traditionally 'patient values' are a patient's unique preferences, concerns, and expectations he or she brings to a clinical encounter. We believe the patients' unique values in life should be prescriptive and action guiding, not standard sets of indicators. An example of a normative value theory in healthcare that explicitly considers patients' unique values in life, is Values Based Medicine (VBM)" (Groenewoud, et al., 2019, p.2). What the authors need to realize about the tier system is that if a patient fails to progress in tier one, they will not move to tier two. Patients failing to progress in tier one will result in doctors finding a treatment that works best for them. While it may seem wrong to prioritize specific patient ailments over others, it is imperative in treatment for a speedy recovery.

Groenewoud et al.,(2019) final argument is that VBHC was holding physical therapist's accountable leads to mistrust. "This 'audit culture' runs the risk of explicitly marginalizing professionalism and professional standards. As a consequence, professional values are under pressure, changing professional ethics into business ethics. This could lead to patients being seen as purely profit or loss centres, and the patient-doctor relationship as subordinate to results" (Groenewoud, et al., 2019, p.4). Measuring patient outcomes leads to a more honest and better treatment and providing patients with a breakdown of their treatment costs provides reassurance that they are receiving quality care. Physical therapists receiving a small compensation is the only way to ensure that all patient data is recorded. Submitting this data will allow for more effective and cost-efficient treatment plans. Porter and Lee explain, "Implementing the value agenda is not a oneshot effort; it is an open-ended commitment. It is a journey that providers embark on, starting with the adoption of the goal of value, a culture of patients first, and the expectation of constant, measurable Improvement. The journey requires strong leadership as well as a commitment to roll out all six value agenda components. For most providers, creating IPU's and measuring outcomes and costs should take the lead." (Porter, Lee, 2019, p.70) Value-based healthcare is not perfect but focusing on patients' needs and overall health will lead to much-needed reform in our healthcare system.

In closing, physical therapists' responsibility to their patients is to ensure a complete recovery by focusing on their patients' needs. Physical therapists accomplish their goal by implementing IPU's that focus on the individual's progress. Implementing value-based healthcare methods leaves room for improvement in fulfilling patients' needs.

## References

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