

Gilchrist's elder medical care practice helps individuals with complex chronic illness coordinate and manage their health in the late stages of life. When patients are hospitalized, real-time alerts ensure that Gilchrist's case managers are equipped to provide timely outreach to support care transitions and communicate treatment goals. These alerts are delivered via the Encounter Notification Service® (ENS®) powered by Audacious Inquiry.

Background and the Need

For older individuals suffering from multiple, complex, and/or chronic health conditions, coordinating treatment across the healthcare system can be challenging. Geriatric medical care programs assist patients with many aspects of this care management process, including coordination between treating providers. An important component of geriatric care is advanced care planning, helping patients document their preferences for end-of-life care. Advanced care planning is crucial to ensure that, in the event of a decline in health status, the patient's wishes are honored when it comes to their desired setting and mode of treatment.¹



One of the key challenges when it comes to care management for complex patients is communicating across care settings and teams to ensure the patient's care plan follows them through the health system. Communication with the emergency department (ED) is particularly important, as many geriatric patients are brought to the ED to assess the severity and implications of a change in health status. At this time, it is important to know the patient's wishes for their care going forward and communicate clearly with the treating physician to ensure the patient's plan is followed.

Current State

When patients in Gilchrist's geriatric medical care program are taken to the ED, an ENS alert is sent to Gilchrist's 24/7 nurse helpline. Timely knowledge of patient ED admission allows geriatric nurses to reach out at the point of care to discuss the patient's prognosis, care plan, and treatment options with the treating physician.

By providing this real-time care coordination, Gilchrist's geriatric care managers help ensure patients receive care according to their expressed care plan.

The Benefit

To the Patient

- Timely notifications facilitate real-time response enabling Gilchrist's nurses to communicate care plans at the point of care.
- When patients' care plans follow them through the healthcare system, unwanted hospitalization and treatment are reduced.
- Rapid outreach shortens length of hospital stay for patients who specify a preference for inpatient or in-home hospice care following a change in condition.²

To the Elder Medical Care Practice

- Care management is especially important for geriatric patients who often have complex medical needs. Encounter alerts help case managers stay up-to-date on patients' status to better coordinate care.
- Timely notification of patient hospitalization allows geriatric nurses to provide the outreach necessary to ensure that the patient's wishes, as expressed through their advanced care plan, follow them through the healthcare system.

¹Daaleman, T., & Helton, M. (2018). Transitions of Care. In *Chronic Illness Care* (30). Retrieved from: https://doi-org.proxy1.library.jhu.edu/10.1007/978-3-319-71812-5_30.
²Gruzen, C., Buonocore, P., Steinberg, J., Ortiz, J., Richardson, L., & Aslakson, R. et al. (2016). Concordance of Advance Care Plans With Inpatient Directives in the Electronic Medical Record for Older Patients Admitted From the Emergency Department. *Journal Of Pain And Symptom Management*, 51(4), 647-651. doi: 10.1016/j.jpainsymman.2015.12.318.

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Gilchrist is a nationally recognized, nonprofit leader in serious illness and end-of-life care. With elder medical care, counseling and hospice, we help people at every stage of serious illness live life to the fullest and make informed choices about their care.

gilchristcares.org



Audacious Inquiry is an industry-shaping health information technology and policy company paving the way toward better care coordination and improved patient outcomes through unparalleled software, strategies and services.

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