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Executive Summary of the 2012 Patient Flow Challenges Assessment:

Hospitals Consider Patient Flow Essential to Care and Competitiveness



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hospitals in
pursuit of excellence™
*Accelerating Performance Improvement
and Implementing Health Reform*

The 2012 Patient Flow Challenges Assessment® was conducted by AHA Solutions and is jointly published with Hospitals in Pursuit of Excellence (HPOE).

Executive Summary

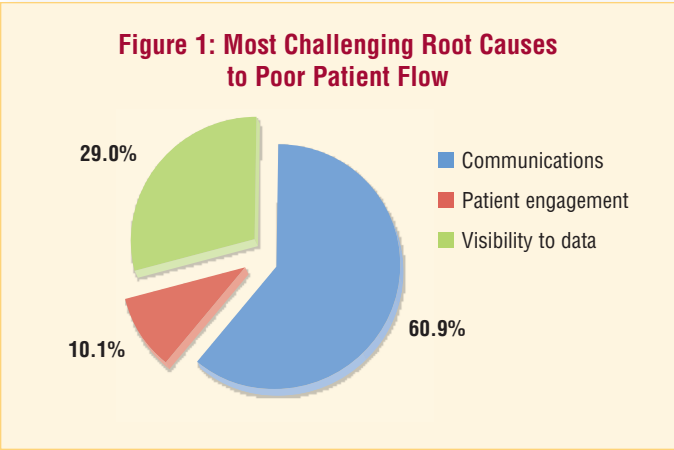
Hospital professionals see a strong connection between patient flow and patient care and to overall hospital effectiveness, according to findings in the 2012 Patient Flow Challenges Assessment (PFCA) conducted by AHA Solutions, Inc. Respondents see good patient flow as essential for reducing readmissions, gaining patient confidence and maintaining competitiveness.

These beliefs were widely held. There is much less consensus as to the leading causes of patient flow challenges and the best strategies for solving them. Although respondents differ about the specific causes of poor patient flow, there is strong agreement that communications is the most difficult obstacle to overcome.

Hospitals are actively pursuing numerous patient flow improvement initiatives through process changes, staffing additions and systems investments and are reporting successes in these efforts. Leading areas being targeted for patient flow improvement include the discharge process, medication reconciliation, bed management and tracking systems for equipment, staff and patients.

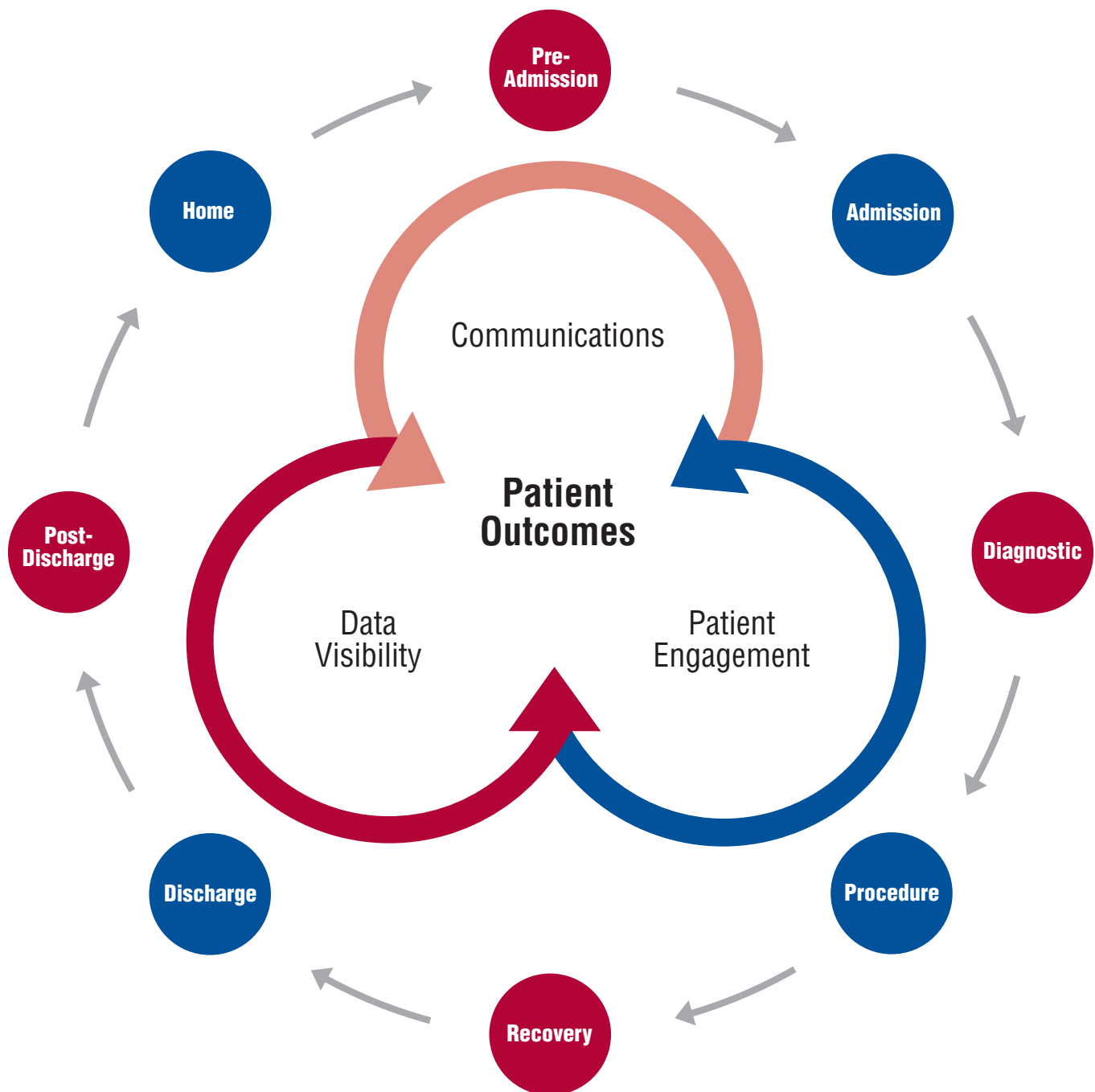
This third PFCA measures opinions about the causes and effects of poor patient flow and initiatives hospitals are taking to overcome them. It examines three leading root causes of patient flow challenges, plus many specific contributing factors; it measures the priority hospitals are placing on improving each stage of patient flow; and it identifies leading process and organizational changes facilities are making to improve patient flow. The report also examines relationships between patient flow and the investments hospitals are making to reduce readmissions, meet Meaningful Use requirements for electronic medical records (EMR) and other topical issues.

Results from the 2012 PFCA make it clear that hospitals are very engaged in improving patient flow and raising the quality of care, and there is always room for improvement. While respondents express many concerns, it is evident that they are largely successful at maintaining high standards of care even where patient flow challenges exist. AHA Solutions uses these findings to continue to identify, develop and educate about solutions to help hospitals solve their patient flow challenges.



Driving Systemic Transformation in Patient Flow

Development and implementation of solutions for the patient flow challenges described in this Assessment are an ongoing process. Few hospitals have resolved all the issues. As a resource to hospitals in pursuit of operational excellence, AHA Solutions is focused on identifying high-value products and services that address hospitals' most critical challenge areas:





About AHA Solutions

AHA Solutions, Inc. is a resource to hospitals pursuing operational excellence. As an American Hospital Association (AHA) member service, AHA Solutions collaborates with hospital leaders and market consultants to conduct the proprietary AHA Signature Due Diligence Process™ and identify solutions to hospital challenges in the areas of care continuum, cultural transformation, clinical integration and financial sustainability. AHA Solutions provides related marketplace analytics and education to support product decision-making. As a subsidiary of the American Hospital Association (AHA), the organization convenes people with like interests for knowledge sharing centered on timely information and research. AHA Solutions is proud to reinvest its profits in the AHA mission: creating healthier communities. For more information, contact AHA Solutions at 800.242.4677 or visit www.aha-solutions.org.

About Hospitals in Pursuit of Excellence

Hospitals in Pursuit of Excellence (HPOE) is the American Hospital Association's strategic platform to accelerate performance improvement and support health reform implementation in the nation's hospitals and health systems. HPOE provides education on best practices through multiple channels, develops evidence-based tools and guides, offers leadership development through fellowships and networks, and engages hospitals in national improvement projects. HPOE brings providers together to improve performance in several areas, including care coordination/readmissions, healthcare-acquired infections, patient safety, and the development of new payment and care delivery models that promote quality and efficiency. Working in collaboration with allied hospital associations and national partners, HPOE synthesizes and disseminates knowledge, shares proven practices, and spreads improvement to support health reform implementation at the local level.



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