Addressing Pain and Stiffness
Rheumatology Clinic

The Problem

The Joint Commission Standard asserts that patients "have the right to appropriate assessment and management of pain". This acknowledges that although pain can be a common experience, unrelieved pain has adverse physiological and psychological effects.

Aim

Measure that comprehensive pain and stiffness assessment occurs during each clinic visit to the Rheumatology outpatient practice. for patients with conditions commonly associated with these symptoms.

The Team

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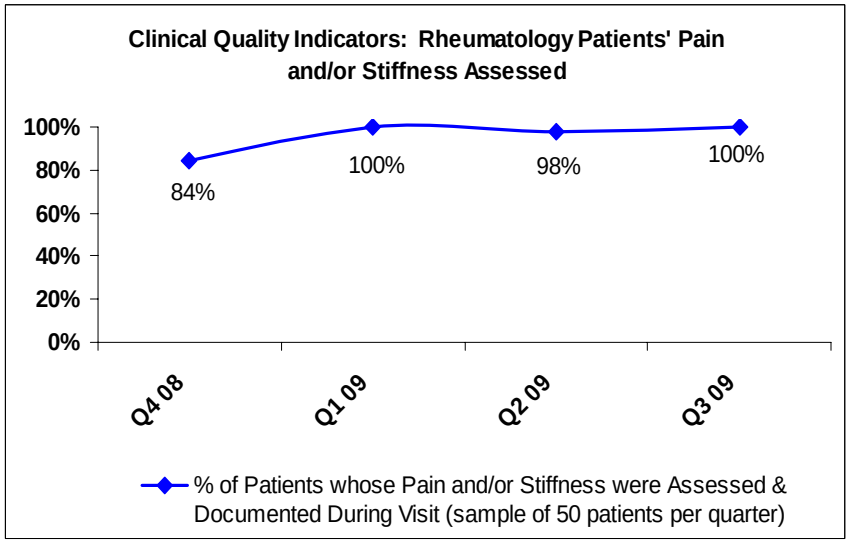
The Interventions

- The Division of Rheumatology reached a consensus on the importance of measuring how frequently pain and stiffness are assessed during outpatient visits.
- A goal of 100% documentation of pain and / or stiffness assessment was set.
- Data was collected on a quarterly basis by reviewing the progress notes in the electronic medical records of Rheumatology patients (a sample of 50 patients per quarter), and was trended on the Rheumatology QI Dashboard.
- Performance feedback was provided to the Rheumatology physicians by individual confidential scorecards, as well as at their Faculty meetings.

The Results

There is strong compliance of pain and stiffness assessment in the Rheumatology outpatient practice. Baseline compliance was 84%, and has constantly been at 98% - 100% post-intervention.



Next Steps

Continue to monitor this measure and provide feedback to the Rheumatology providers with the goal of maintaining 100% compliance.

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