



from The Wellness Network



Novant Health Brunswick Medical Center

Location

Bolivia, North Carolina

Size

74-bed acute care hospital with a staff of 200 physicians, 450 employees and 150 volunteers. Five labor, delivery, recovery and postpartum rooms, and 488 annual births (2014).

Affiliation

Part of Novant Health, a four-state integrated network of physician clinics, outpatient centers and hospitals serving more than 4 million patients annually.

Of note

Named a 2013 "Top Performer on Key Quality Measures" by The Joint Commission.

The Challenge

Since it opened in 1977, Novant Health Brunswick Medical Center had relied on print pamphlets and brochures for the bulk of its patient education needs, including maternity care. The problem: Patients needed more information than a few printed materials could provide.

"There is so much for new mothers to learn about taking care of themselves and their new baby," explained Karen Keeler, RN, clinical practice specialist. "To limit that educational exposure to a 48- to 72-hour hospital stay, or to just hand them a book at discharge, is self-defeating. In addition, there was no continuity with the materials a patient might get at an antepartum visit and what they would receive at discharge from the hospital." Keeler recognized the need for a fundamental change to improve maternal and infant outcomes.

The Requirements

Brunswick Medical Center needed an education solution that would engage new parents from the antepartum period through their maternity stay and into postpartum care. The medical center also required material that met the state of North Carolina's requirements for SIDS education, newborn screening, and other critical infant safety topics.

The Solution

Half of the hospitals in the Novant Health system were already successfully using the Newborn Channel for inpatient education, so Brunswick Medical Center staff had the experiences and resources of their colleagues to draw on in setting up the channel for their facility. However, utilization levels varied throughout the system. Some sites were heavy users, and others hadn't taken advantage of key Newborn Channel features such as the online portal. Keeler and her team saw a real opportunity to do more with the channel.

The Implementation

"You really have to have a core group invested in the implementation to make it successful," said Keeler. "We needed support from not just the clinical staff, but from engineering, IT, guest services, our volunteer staff, and our television vendor."

One of the key members of the implementation team was Beth Hicks, manager of women's health at Brunswick Medical Center. Keeler's team worked with Hicks to prepare for the Newborn Channel launch and figure out the best way to educate maternity staff on the Channel's features and benefits. The team also mapped out a system to ensure that patients received program guides and information on using the online portal.

Here are the key features of Brunswick Medical Center's utilization plan:

- **Default to the Newborn Channel.** When maternity patients turn on their TV, the Newborn Channel is the first thing they see.
- **Make it part of the rounds.** The women's department gives patients information to login to the online Newborn Channel portal with "prescribed" videos to watch during daily rounds.
- **Involve practices for antepartum and postpartum care.** Physician practices in the Novant Health system were given information on using the online Newborn Channel portal, and they assigned videos for patients to watch between visits.
- **Make program guides easy to find.** The hospital has program guides customized with facility information and includes them in patient admissions packet.
- **Enlist volunteers as advocates.** Deborah Rochelle, guest services and volunteer manager and Natalie Clark, volunteer programs coordinator, ensured that all volunteers were included in training and communications on the Channel. Volunteers are also supplied with guides to share with patients during the hospital "cheer cart" rounds.

Lessons Learned

Keeler reports that feedback from both staff and patients has been overwhelmingly positive. And patients are more satisfied with the preparation they are getting to transition back home. Since the channel was implemented, there has been a 7 percent increase in patients who answered that they strongly agree or agree with item 24 on the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) survey ("When I left the hospital, I had a good understanding of the things I was responsible for in managing my health").

In addition to watching the Channel during their maternity stay, patients are taking advantage of the online Newborn Channel portal to proactively educate themselves before and after discharge. In the eight months following the Newborn Channel launch, patient logins to the Brunswick online portal were three times that of all five other Novant Health system facilities combined, and video views for Brunswick Medical Center were 25 percent higher than the Novant Health system total. No longer an "afterthought," patient education has become an integral part of the continuity of care.

About The Wellness Network

The Wellness Network (TWN) is dedicated to delivering life-enhancing wellness information to motivate patients to take action, aid hospitals in meeting accreditation and improve overall quality of health care. TWN owns and operates the largest and most comprehensive in-hospital health TV networks in the US, available in more than 2,000 hospitals and on 300,000 screens. Channels include the Patient Channel, Newborn Channel, Your NICU Baby, HeartCare Channel and MedSerenity Channel.