

Teletriage: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly...



How does your agency rate?

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Today's Objectives

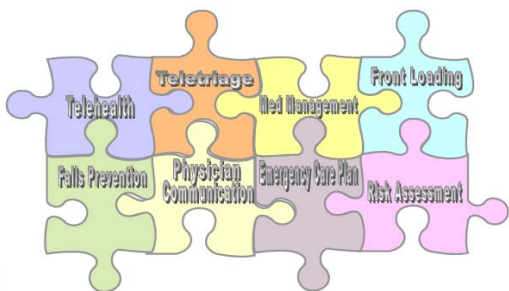
After today's session, participants will:

1. Understand the components of teletriage
2. Assess your organization's current teletriage practices
3. Plan and implement effective teletriage strategies

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The Acute Care Hospitalization Puzzle



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Best Practice: Teletriage

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Teletriage

Definition

Unscheduled, appropriate disposition of health-related problems by skilled clinicians via telephone or electronic information processing technologies (telemitors) when initiated by the patient/caregiver*

*From Telehealth Reference 2008

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The teletriage \$ million question...


Your aunt is a patient at your home health agency and calls the agency with complaints of increased weight and SOB.

- Are you confident that all staff know your teletriage protocols?
- Would each staff member handle this situation in the same fashion?

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**Home Telehealth Reference
2006/2007**




www.medqic.org

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**Teletriage:
The “Ugly” Scenario**





IS THIS YOUR AGENCY???

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**Building Your Teletriage
Program...**

-  Organizational Considerations
-  Orientation/Staff Education
-  Ongoing Evaluation
-  Outcome Enhancement: ACH
-  Decision Support Tools



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Organizational Considerations

- Initiated by the patient or caregiver
- Triage is **not** optional
- It occurs daily as part of normal operations
- The organization and the professionals within the organization determine how well triage is accomplished



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Evaluating Your HHA

- Are calls handled in a similar manner by all clinicians?
- Do clinicians have resources available to them to intervene appropriately?
- Does your organization periodically assess your triage processes?

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Value of Triage

- A mechanism to **increase the value of services** to patients, caregivers and referral sources
- Illustrated by the **increased access** to skilled empathetic and effective HHA services
- Effective triage promotes the appropriate use of services and resources and supports the **reduction of avoidable hospitalizations**

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How is my agency currently ensuring confidentiality relating to teletriage?

The **designated patient contact(s)** is the person(s) identified by the patient as being responsible for **personal health information** shared by health care providers.

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CONFIDENTIALITY

Every agency should establish a policy to describe **HOW** patient contact information is obtained.



Every agency should establish a policy providing guidelines to ensure patient confidentiality **IS** maintained per the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), enacted by the Congress of the United States of America in 1996.

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Routing of Calls/Contacts

- Is there a potential for calls to be lost?
- Are calls answered promptly?
- Are calls transferred to a clinician quickly and efficiently?
- Is there a way to track outcomes for calls/contacts?
- Is the teletriage process supporting the agency mission and goals?

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Teletriage Organizational Evaluation



How is my agency currently performing teletriage?

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Orientation/ Staff Education

- Teletriage Skills Assessment
 - Rates the skills of the staff performing triage
- Teletriage Orientation Checklist
 - Systematic review for new clinical staff
- Ongoing Teletriage Competencies
 - Ensures that staff are adequately trained and are able to apply training to real-life situations

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Ongoing Evaluation

Teletriage Competency Program	Teletriage Program Evaluation
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Ongoing Evaluation Sample Competency Methods:

- Self-Assessment
- Peer Review Case Studies
- Exemplars
- Post-Tests
- Observation of Daily Practice
- Discussion Groups
- QI Monitoring
- Presentations
- Return Demonstration
- Mock Events

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Ongoing Evaluation Triage Program Evaluation

- Triage Encounter Record Review Form
 - Evaluates triage encounters
- Call Log
 - Tracks incoming calls/data for ongoing review
- Patient Satisfaction Survey
 - Incorporated into routine patient satisfaction surveys

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**ACUTE CARE
HOSPITALIZATION**
Home Health Quality Improvement

Outcome Enhancement: Acute Care Hospitalization

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Teletriage & ACH
Hospitalization Risk Assessment

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Teletriage nurses should be aware of high-risk patients and be prepared to intervene and avoid hospitalizations

ACUTE CARE HOSPITALIZATION
Home Health Quality Improvement

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Teletriage & ACH
Emergency Contact Plan

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Plans should be updated after any contacts by the patient/caregiver to the HHA with questions or problems

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Home Health Quality Improvement

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Teletriage & ACH
Patient Self-Care Management

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Patients requiring teletriage should be the #1 candidates for self-care management instructions!

ACUTE CARE HOSPITALIZATION
Home Health Quality Improvement

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HHQI Home Health Quality Improvement
National Campaign
"Piecing the Puzzle Together... to Reduce Avoidable Hospitalizations."

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Decision Support Tools

- Evidence-based protocols
- Assist with:
 - Triage assessments
 - Decision-making
 - Documentation
- Help reduce the chance of overlooking essential information
- Standardize approaches to lessen ambiguity in decision-making

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Decision Support Tools

Using Decisions Support in Your HHA

- Educate clinicians
- Enhance critical thinking
- Advise and guide the nurse with assessments
- Organize the call
- Consider extraneous factors
- Support the nursing decision
- Evaluate triage encounters

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Decision Support Tools

Do Not Replace Nursing Judgment!!!

Use Decision Support Tools with:

- Flexibility
- Nursing Judgment
- Critical Thinking Skills
- Intuition



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Decision Support Risk Level: *Moderate-to-High*

Assessment	Risk Level	Interventions	Evaluation/ Follow-up
Likely Urgent: Emergent Care Likely •Minimally, an immediate contact to physician is necessary •Consider 911 paramedic transportation	Moderate-to-High	•Teletriage clinician provides instruction and support to maintain the patient until the physician can be reached •Inability to reach the physician may be a strong indicator for 911 paramedic transport	•May result in an onsite visit that day •May result in emergent care at the physician office or emergency department
Urgent •911 paramedic transport necessary •Patient condition may be life threatening	High	•Teletriage clinician instructs patient/caretaker to immediately seek 911 paramedic transport •May require additional patient care instructions until 911 transport arrives	•Teletriage clinician provides support until 911 transport arrives •Care is coordinated with physician

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Decision Support Risk Level: *Low-to-Moderate*

Assessment	Risk Level	Interventions	Evaluation/ Follow-up
Potentially Urgent: Same Day Onsite Visit Required •Patient condition requires the skills of the homecare provider onsite that day either for assessment or for hands-on interventions	Low-to-Moderate	•Teletriage clinician provides instruction and support to maintain the patient until the nurse arrives onsite •Onsite nursing visit is scheduled for that day •Care is coordinated with primary nurse •Teletriage encounter is documented in the medical record •In the event that a nursing visit cannot be made that day, the patient may require emergent care	•May result in physician contact •May result in adjusted physician orders or care plan

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Teletriage: The “Good” Scenario




This CAN be your agency!!!


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Teletriage Implementation Tool

 Teletriage Program Implementation Tool

Process Identified for Change	Process Requirements	Initiatives	Date Completed



HOMEWORK!!!

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QUESTIONS???



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