



NEWS RELEASE

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Assessing how much inpatient care information patients retain after hospital discharge

Study in February 2023 issue of The Joint Commission Journal on Quality and Patient Safety

(OAKBROOK TERRACE, Illinois, January 31, 2023) – Hospitalized patients receive a large amount of medical information from their healthcare team. Patient understanding of medical care reduces readmission rates and improves patient satisfaction, yet the literature suggests that patients often have poor retention of the large amount of care information they received despite numerous interventions.

A [new study](#) in the February 2023 issue of *The Joint Commission Journal on Quality and Patient Safety* (JQPS) evaluated how well patients retain care information after hospital discharge and assessed patient perspectives on facilitators of this process, such as whiteboards, discussions with providers, discharge paperwork and patient portal.

Researchers at the University of Michigan School of Medicine, Ann Arbor, Michigan, conducted semi-structured phone interviews of patients admitted to general medicine resident teaching services within 24 to 48 hours post-hospitalization to assess their recall of four key domains of care:

- Diagnoses addressed
- Inpatient treatment
- Post-discharge treatment plans
- Medication changes

Chart review verified patient responses which were then categorized by independent reviewers as correct, partially correct or incorrect.

Results showed the vast majority (90%) of patients were confident in their knowledge of their diagnoses and treatment, yet independent review revealed only:

- 58.5% correctly recalled diagnoses addressed
- 64.2% correctly recalled inpatient treatment
- 50.9% correctly recalled post-discharge treatment plans
- 43.4% correctly recalled medication changes

Whiteboards were the most frequently used facilitator (96.2%), yet their content was rated least helpful for retaining care information. Patients suggested several areas for improvement, including prioritizing bedside pen and paper along with updating whiteboards with diagnostic and therapeutic information.

“Patient education and engagement is considered a key component of transitional care efforts, leading to the development of standardized discharge instructions and patient-centered discharge tools,” notes Blair P. Golden, MD, MS, and Karen Okrainec, MD, MSc, FRCPC, in an [accompanying editorial](#). “Health systems must proactively address disparities that exist with regard to patient and caregiver engagement surrounding care transitions, in addition to broader structural determinants of health that have been shown to contribute to health outcomes.”

Also featured in the February issue:

- [Teamwork Is Associated with Reduced Hospital Staff Burnout at Military Treatment Facilities: Findings from the 2019 Department of Defense Patient Safety Culture Survey](#) (Deloitte Consulting LLP, Arlington, Virginia)
- [Providers’ and Patients’ Perspectives on Diagnostic Errors in the Acute Care Setting](#) (Brigham and Women’s Hospital, Boston)
- [Practical Applications of Rapid Qualitative Analysis for Operations, Quality Improvement, and Research in Dynamically Changing Hospital Environments](#) (participants from 24 healthcare institutions)
- [A New Teaching Tool for Peer Review of Charting and Care in the Emergency Department](#) (Mount Sinai Morningside/West, New York)
- [A Free Mobile Application Improves the Efficiency of Hand Hygiene Observation Collection: Experiences at a Pediatric Hospital in South Texas](#) (Driscoll Children’s Hospital, Corpus Christi, Texas)
- [Messaging About COVID-19 Safety Measures Is Counterproductive in Cancer Screening Outreach: Results of a Pragmatic Randomized Trial](#) (research letter)
- [Evidence-based Messages Are Part of Evidence-Based Medicine: Optimizing Outreach Approaches for Cancer Screenings](#) (editorial)
- [The Implementation of a Dedicated Newborn Examination Room: A Quality Improvement Project](#) (research letter)

For more information, visit the [JQPS website](#).

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Note for editors

The article is “[Assessment of Patient Retention of Inpatient Care Information Post-Hospitalization](#),” by Ryan Townshend, MD; Christopher Grondin, MD; Ashwin Gupta, MD; and Jawad Al-Khafaji, MD, MSHA. The article appears in *The Joint Commission Journal on Quality and Patient Safety*, volume 49, number 2 (February 2023), published by Elsevier.

The Joint Commission Journal on Quality and Patient Safety

The Joint Commission Journal on Quality and Patient Safety (JQPS) is a peer-reviewed journal providing healthcare professionals with innovative thinking, strategies and practices in improving quality and safety in healthcare. JQPS is the official journal of [The Joint Commission](#) and [Joint Commission Resources, Inc.](#) Original case studies, program or project reports, reports of new methodologies or the new application of methodologies, research studies, and commentaries on issues and practices are all considered.