

# Better Outcomes through Patient Education

Handout

## Introduce Paperwork and Process to Patients

- Always take time to introduce paperwork and processes to patients so they do not have to figure things out for themselves
  - Why?  
Why does the patient need to do this? Is this beneficial for the patient?
  - What?  
What is the patient responsible for?
  - How?  
How does the patient proceed?

## Why does the Patient have to do this? Is there a benefit?

- With any paperwork, but especially for outcomes, it is important to help patients see how this benefits them

### **IT'S ALL ABOUT YOU**

- YOUR therapist uses this outcomes assessment to identify YOUR current function
- Therapist needs to know YOUR baseline functional status in order to create a treatment plan for YOU
- Functional questions provide therapist with specific, functionally-based movements or activities that can be converted into functional goals for YOU
- Provides mechanism for therapist to monitor and track change in YOUR condition (set up for Interim/Discharge assessments)

## What is the Patient responsible for?

- Create script, not just for CareConnections Outcomes, but for all elements patient may be responsible for completing to facilitate treatment – this sets groundwork for patient expectations
  - Billing
  - Insurance Verification
  - Scheduling
  - Health History
  - Outcomes
  - Patient Satisfaction
- Expecting patients to complete all of these without explanation results in patient push-back, confusion, or both

## How does the Patient proceed?

- Provide instruction or clarification where necessary
  - Why am I (the patient) doing this again?
  - What am I (the patient) completing again?
  - How do I (the patient) do this?
- Some scripting may be addressed when patient makes appointment (i.e. over the phone)
- Some scripting may still be necessary when patient arrives for appointment

Create a script with the following points  
(remember – this is ALL about the patient)

### INTRODUCTION POINTS

- Results fuel research our clinic uses to improve service to YOU and to communicate with YOUR insurance carrier
- Therapist uses results to create functional goals FOR YOU
- Therapist uses results to monitor YOUR progress and adjust YOUR treatment plan where necessary
- Frequency – evaluation, interim, & discharge
  - YOU should expect to receive the form multiple times throughout episode

## Create a script (continued)

### INSTRUCTION POINTS (based on use of Patient Kiosk App)

- Prior to your first appointment, you will receive an automated email with a link and access code for completing your functional assessment (if you collect patient email)
- On your first visit, we will ask you to complete a short functional assessment.
- Please carefully read the instructions and answer each question. If you make a mistake, use the “Previous” button to go back.
- Once you click on Submit at the end of the survey, you cannot change your answers

## Other options to include in Script

- Pain rating – the pain index represents a scale of 0-10, where 0 = no pain and 10 = worst pain imaginable
- Mention FABQ if you will be including this form for the patient to complete
- On Interim/Discharge, note that you will also be asked questions about your current work status and Global Rating of Change. Global Rating of Change represents how much you feel your condition has changed since beginning treatment (for better or worse).

## Be Flexible

- Script does not have to be exact, but it should focus on benefits to the patient
- Be willing and ready to modify your script based on common questions or issues posed by your patients

### EXAMPLE

If patient is elderly, be proactive and explain that the functional question about Recreation/Sports does not apply only to sports, but can be any activity the patient enjoys in their spare time (i.e. reading, playing cards, gardening)

## Appreciate the Patient's Effort

It may not seem like a big deal, but a little appreciation goes a long way

THANK the patient for taking the time to complete this valuable information

# Therapist Responsibility

- The most common question posed by therapists

“The patient tells me they are feeling better, but according to the functional index they just completed, they are actually doing worse than when they started!”

- Therapists need to involve themselves and the patient in the outcomes process

## Review Functional Index with Patient

- Evaluation
  - Make sure you review the functional index completed by the patient for their evaluation and go over each of the questions with the patient
  - Use the evaluation to clarify the functional motions that patients rate when they complete an outcomes assessment

### EXAMPLE:

Squatting – patient says they don’t squat or can’t squat. Explain – squatting is performed any time you sit down or stand up.

Walking – patient cannot gage distance. Explain ¼ mile as one city block, or give other visual or representative examples to help patient properly assess how far they can walk.

- Remind patient that you will be asking them to complete another functional assessment at a future date and go over the completed interim assessment with the patient to ensure patient understands the functional motions and goals

## Warnings (DO NOTs)

- Patients need to complete functional assessments independently
- Provide instruction, but don't lead the patient through the forms or question patient responses while the patient is completing the form

## Summary

- Why? Better Compliance, Better Results
- Explain the process – set patient expectations
- Reinforce that this is ALL about the patient, to benefit the patient, to rehabilitate the patient
- Therapist uses CareConnections Functional Index to set patient goals
- Therapist reviews completed assessments with patient to ensure and reinforce patient understanding