

Update on the Effectiveness of Lifestyle Coaching SMART Goal Sessions with Patients at a Student-Led Clinic Pre- and Post-COVID

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At the KNIGHTS student-run free clinic, patients receive lifestyle coaching using a SMART goal-setting approach to improve medical outcomes. These visits were traditionally completed face-to-face with follow-ups conducted via text-messaging; however, due to COVID-19 they were transitioned to phone call visits. The purpose of this study is to compare patient goal adherence and response rates between face-to-face and phone call consultations with SMART goal setting followed by text message follow-ups. Given the ongoing nature of this project, the following is an update from previous work to include new patients. Although this study has a low number of participants during the COVID-19 pandemic, our results thus far show goal adherence and response rates improved with lifestyle coaching calls compared to in-person consultations at two weeks and four weeks after the encounter. Many factors may have contributed to these results, such as intrinsic motivation of the patients, amount of time spent with each patient, and patient awareness of the necessity for lifestyle changes in light of COVID-19. Despite the limitations of this study, the results affirm the feasibility of replicating in-person SMART goal-setting sessions through remote lifestyle coaching calls while maintaining the safety and health of KNIGHTS Clinic patients.

Data Analysis

Using CareMessage, patients were texted 2 weeks and 4 weeks after their lifestyle goal-setting sessions by a KNIGHTS Clinic patient education team member. In these follow-up texts, patients were asked whether or not they had been meeting their goals. Patient responses were tracked for whether or not they responded to these follow-up texts and whether they responded “Yes” or “No” in regard to goal achievement. Response and goal achievement rates were calculated as percentages and compared between the two groups: patients that received in-person consultations at KNIGHTS Clinic prior to COVID-19 versus patients that received consultations via phone calls after COVID-19. Additionally, the number of goals set for each patient and number of lifestyle topics discussed was tracked per patient consultation. Lastly, the average number of lifestyle topics discussed per patient consultation was calculated for the two groups and compared.

Pre-COVID: Goals set: n=42. Response rate at 2 weeks: 59% (n=25). Goals met at 2 weeks: 50% (n=21). Response rate at 4 weeks: 50% (n=21). Goals met at 4 weeks: 50% (n=21). Average number of topics discussed per patient consultation: 2.2.

Post-COVID: Goals set: n=12. Response rate at 2 weeks: 83% (n=10). Goals met at 2 weeks: 67% (n=8). Response rate at 4 weeks: 67% (n=8). Goals met at 4 weeks: 59% (n=7). Average number of topics discussed per patient consultation: 2.8.