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Title: Rehospitalization rates for patients with COPD who require supplemental oxygen therapy following a hospitalization for an exacerbation

Dr. Brian 22942 Carlin bwcmd@yahoo.com MD ¹, Ms. Kim 22943 Wiles kwiles@klingshc.com ² and Mr. Dan 22944 Easley deasley@klingshc.com ². ¹ Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine, Allegheny General Hospital, Pittsburgh, PA, United States, 15212 and ² Medicine, Klingensmith HealthCare, Ford City, PA, United States, 16226 .

Body: Objective: To compare the hospital readmission rates for patients with COPD who require supplemental oxygen therapy following an exacerbation who are entered into a home-care based, respiratory therapist centered transition of care program. Method: Patients with a diagnosis of a COPD exacerbation who required supplemental oxygen therapy on hospital discharge were entered into a post hospitalization transition of care program [Discharge, Assessment and Summary @ Home (D.A.S.H., Klingensmith HealthCare, Ford City, PA)]. The program consists of face to face visits by a respiratory therapist with the patient on days 2, 7, and 30 following hospital discharge. Education, behavior modification, skills training, oxygen titration during performance of activities of daily living, clinical assessment, and adherence data collection are components of the program. The 30 day readmission rates following discharge for all patients entered into the program over a twenty four month period (March 2010 through February 2012) were evaluated. Results: 385 consecutive patients with COPD (mean age 71 + 12 years) from 23 different hospitals were enrolled into the program. 123 (31%) patients refused additional follow up after the first home visit. The 30 day readmission rate for those patients who chose to continue the program (209) was 2.8%. Conclusions: The use of a multiple visit respiratory therapist based patient centered management program resulted in a significant decrease in the 30 day readmission rates for those patients who elected to continue with the DASH management program.