



Technological Strategies to Improve the Timeliness and Efficiency of Palliative Care Consults



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BACKGROUND

In 2013 we received Joint Commission (JC) Certification in Advanced Palliative Care (PC) and redesignation in 2015. As a JC certified program we are held to a set of standards and measures. Our target goal for initiation of the Palliative Care initial assessment is 90%. Patients referred to PC must be assessed within 24 hours by the PC-RN and within 48 hours by the Social Service Worker and Pastoral Care. In 2013 our measure of success for this goal was below 90% .

PURPOSE

To identify and implement technological strategies to improve timeliness and efficiency of consults to the PC team. Objectives include:

- Provide immediate notification of PC consults to PC staff.
- Prioritize and respond to referrals in a timely manner.
- Improve the timeliness of the Palliative interdisciplinary assessment.

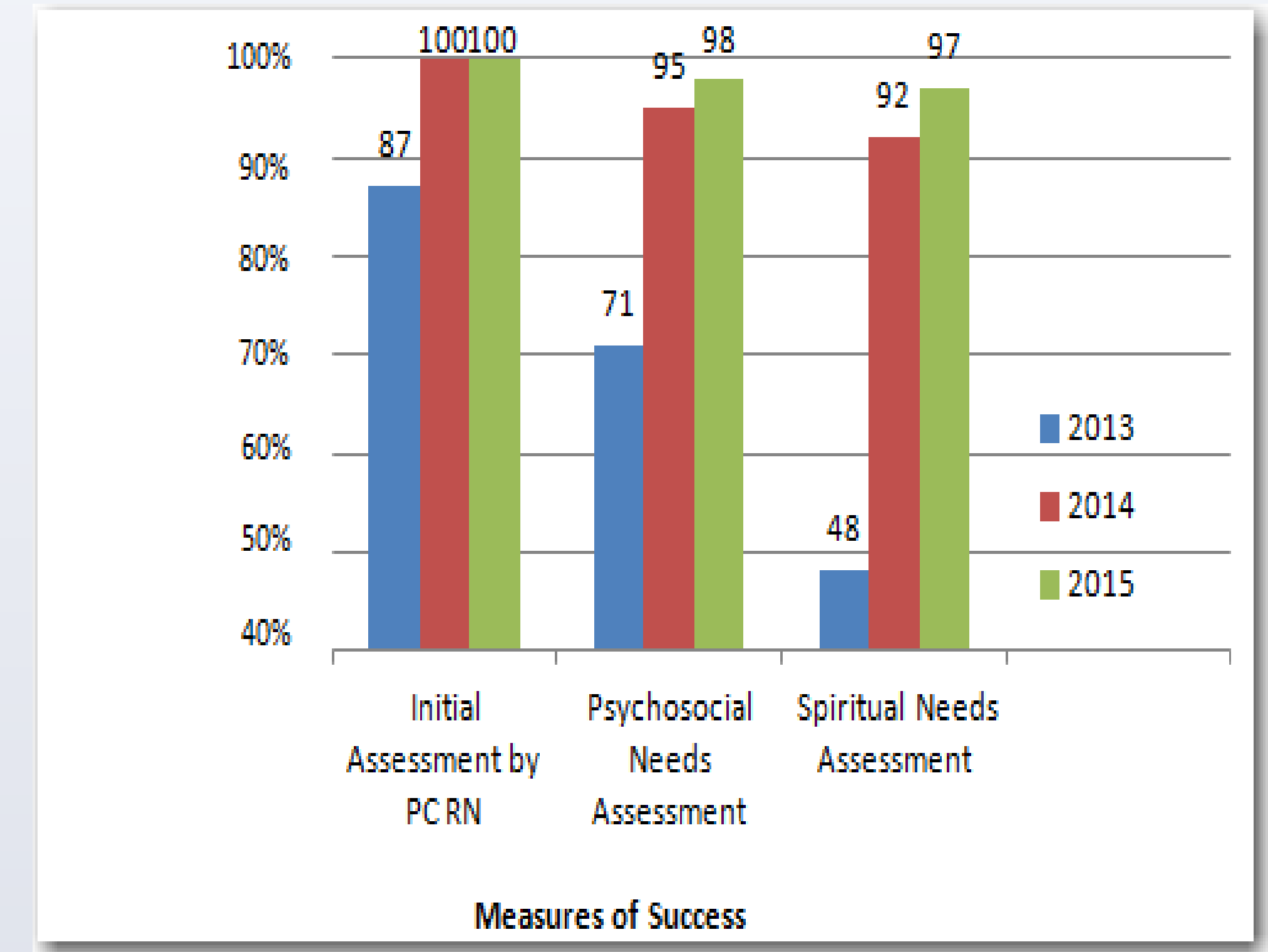
STRATEGIES

- PC triggers embedded in the electronic Nursing Admission Assessment
- Creation of a PC Consult order in our Electronic order entry system.
- Real Time List of patients with PC consults
- Email Notification of PC consults to PC staff (2013)
- Utilization of Mobile Phone (2013)
- Remote Electronic Health Record (EHR) access (2014)

POSITIVE OUTCOMES

- Volume of PC Consults increased 15% from 2013 to 2014.
- Increase in Timeliness of Initial Assessment by PC-RN within 24 hours from 87% to 100%.
- Timeliness of Psychosocial Needs Assessment within 48 hours increased from 71% to 98%.
- Timeliness of Spiritual Needs Assessment within 48 hours increased from 48% to 97%.

OUTCOMES



CONCLUSIONS

Technology was the catalyst in expediting PC consults. Lessons learned include during off-hours, holidays /weekends, the covering off-site PC staff had no EHR access to complete the initial assessment. A laptop with secured, remote access was provided as a solution. Implications for future use include leveraging technology to improve other aspects of our PC program.

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