

Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)

Narrative for Health Care Organizations in Ontario

March 18, 2024

OVERVIEW

The Algoma NPLC's 2024-2025 Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) represents a tangible opportunity to chart a clear course toward enhanced healthcare delivery performance. In the upcoming year, our primary focus will be on elevating the patient experience at the Algoma NPLC. We are committed to continually enhancing patient interactions and fostering collaboration with our dedicated staff, actively implementing feedback gleaned from our surveys to drive meaningful improvements.

Furthermore, our commitment to staff education remains steadfast, with a particular emphasis on vital topics such as health equity and diversity. This ongoing initiative serves as the bedrock for the exceptional care our clinicians provide to our patients.

The Algoma Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic remains deeply engaged in initiatives supporting our local Ontario Health Team (OHT). As a core partner of the Algoma OHT, we are dedicated to delivering integrated, patient-centered care rooted in the quadruple aim to our community. Our initiatives, including the pap campaign, early frailty identification, and chronic pain management, are pivotal in addressing diverse healthcare needs. The pap campaign offers cervical cancer screening to unattached patients, ensuring equitable access to essential screenings. Our early frailty identification program facilitates timely assessment and resources to support patients in remaining in their homes, minimizing hospitalizations and long-term care admissions. Additionally, our chronic pain clinic provides education and resources to empower patients in managing chronic illness and improving health outcomes.

Finally, the Algoma NPLC is embarking on the development of a

patient advisory committee to inform decisions aimed at enhancing access and overall patient experience. This initiative aligns with our strategic direction and underscores our commitment to fostering patient engagement. By nurturing this relationship with our patients, we will leverage their perspectives to develop innovative solutions, enhancing patient communication, appointment booking processes, and access to clinical guidance. Together, we will continue to prioritize patient-centered care and drive meaningful advancements in healthcare delivery.

ACCESS AND FLOW

The Algoma Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic is dedicated to ensuring timely access to healthcare services for individuals across the Algoma region. Recognizing the critical importance of timely intervention, the clinic employs a multifaceted approach to enhance accessibility and responsiveness in care delivery.

Utilizing the convenience of online appointment booking, patients can easily schedule appointments, ensuring they receive the care they need when they want it. Additionally, the clinic has increased the availability of same-day appointments, prioritizing prompt attention to urgent medical concerns and minimizing wait times.

Moreover, the clinic has implemented several targeted interventions to address specific healthcare needs promptly:

Appointment with social work for patients experiencing acute changes in their mood: Patients encountering acute changes in mood can promptly access support through scheduled appointments with our dedicated social work team, ensuring timely intervention and appropriate support services.

Pharmacist chart reviews for patients recently discharged from the hospital: To facilitate seamless transitions of care, our pharmacist conducts thorough chart reviews for patients recently discharged from the hospital, ensuring medication adherence, preventing adverse drug interactions, and optimizing treatment outcomes.

Counseling by nursing staff for patients with cold/flu symptoms: Our nursing staff provides counseling and guidance for patients exhibiting cold or flu symptoms, preventing unnecessary appointments and promoting self-care strategies, thereby optimizing clinic resources and patient convenience.

Hypertension and Diabetes management follow-up by registered nurses: Patients with hypertension and diabetes receive dedicated follow-up appointments with our registered nurses, ensuring ongoing management and monitoring of their conditions, promoting continuity of care and optimizing health outcomes.

By embracing technology, fostering interprofessional collaboration, and placing a strong emphasis on patient-centered care, the Algoma Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic exemplifies a commitment to ensuring that individuals receive the right care at the right time.

ADMINISTRATIVE BURDEN

The Algoma Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic is steadfast in its commitment to ensuring that nurse practitioners and other clinicians prioritize patient care over paperwork, implementing innovative solutions to streamline administrative tasks and enhance the focus on patient interaction.

Firstly, clinicians are encouraged to utilize Oceanmd for referrals to specialists, a service that provides timely updates on referral status and appointment times when available. This integration not only expedites the referral process but also ensures that patients receive timely access to specialized care without undue delays.

Secondly, clinicians are empowered to leverage the advanced functionalities of the Electronic Medical Record (EMR) system, including the creation of templates for common appointment types such as diabetes or mental health follow-ups. By standardizing documentation through templates, clinicians can efficiently capture pertinent information while optimizing time spent with patients during consultations.

Additionally, the clinic has implemented secure messaging systems to communicate normal test results directly to patients, enhancing transparency and providing reassurance in a timely manner. Through these initiatives, the Algoma Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic fosters an environment where clinicians can devote their expertise and attention to delivering high-quality, patient-centered care, while minimizing administrative burdens and improving overall efficiency in healthcare delivery.

Finally, the clinic has initiated the process to enroll clinical staff in Clinical Viewer. This tool will help streamline access to information about the patients to reduce the investigative burden on the staff. This will improve the overall patient care with increased efficacy and accuracy.

EQUITY AND INDIGENOUS HEALTH

The Algoma Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic operates on the traditional territory of the Anishnaabeg people, as recognized by the Robinson-Huron Treaty. We are committed to providing comprehensive care that prioritizes the health and well-being of individual patients. Our staff, deeply integrated into the community, offers a wide range of services tailored to meet the diverse needs of our patients and community members.

Through collaborative partnerships within the community, the Algoma Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic ensures access to essential services for vulnerable individuals in the area. These partnerships enable us to address health disparities effectively and cater to a diverse population.

Our staff actively engage in ongoing education to better understand the diverse demographics of our community. They participate in Indigenous Culture training facilitated by healthcare professionals, emphasizing traditional Anishnaabeg beliefs and culture. This training fosters an inclusive environment for the Indigenous patients we serve.

At the Algoma Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic, we prioritize accessibility to healthcare for all individuals. We aim to cultivate an environment that respects and embraces the cultural beliefs of our diverse population. While our current model reflects this commitment, we are continuously striving to improve. Through ongoing education and by setting an example, we aim to further enhance our efforts in providing equal healthcare access, fostering inclusivity, and prioritizing cultural sensitivity within our clinic.

PATIENT/CLIENT/RESIDENT EXPERIENCE

The Algoma NPLC is committed to prioritizing patient experience as part of our strategic direction, aligning with the quadruple aim focus. We continuously seek to enhance opportunities for gaining insights from our patient population. Our efforts to improve the patient experience through our Online Appointment Booking (OAB) solution are guided by patient-centered metrics, including feedback on ease of use, effectiveness, and demand for various appointment offerings.

Twice a year, we invite patients to evaluate their overall experience at the Algoma NPLC. Survey results play a crucial role in guiding our operational decisions. For instance, our surveys have revealed a high number of patients visiting the emergency department for minor ailments. In response, we have increased the availability of same-day and next-day appointment slots to ensure more urgent access to care at our clinic.

While surveys have proven valuable for engaging with our patient population and obtaining relevant information, they have limitations in promoting open dialogue. Recognizing this, one of our strategic goals at the Algoma NPLC is the establishment of a patient advisory committee. We aim to complete the inception and implementation of this committee by April 2025, allowing for more direct and collaborative input from our patients in shaping our services and initiatives.

PROVIDER EXPERIENCE

At the Algoma Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic, we prioritize the well-being and satisfaction of our clinicians by implementing various strategies to ensure their experience is optimal.

Firstly, we provide opportunities for regular team meetings and maintain open communication channels to facilitate discussions on challenges, idea-sharing, and celebrating successes collaboratively.

Secondly, we support our staff in pursuing further education or certifications relevant to their roles, fostering continuous professional development and growth. For example, support is provided to registered practical nurses who want to become registered nurses, nurses who aspire to become nurse practitioners, and social workers seeking to pursue their master's degrees.

Additionally, flexible scheduling options are available to accommodate personal needs and preferences, promoting a healthy work-life balance. Recognizing the importance of mental health, we offer access to counseling services and employee assistance programs to support staff well-being.

Furthermore, we actively involve our clinicians in decision-making processes, seeking their input on matters affecting their work environment, fostering a sense of ownership and empowerment.

Lastly, we ensure adequate resources and equipment are readily available to support staff in delivering high-quality care, including medical supplies, equipment maintenance, and IT support. Through these initiatives, we strive to create a supportive and fulfilling work environment for our clinicians, ultimately enhancing patient care outcomes and experiences.

SAFETY

Ensuring patient safety remains our paramount concern at the Algoma NPLC. This year, we are committed to establishing and leveraging a patient advisory committee to enhance our safety measures. This committee will play a pivotal role in providing valuable feedback on various safety protocols, enabling us to enact meaningful improvements within our clinic.

In instances where patients or providers are unwell, we prioritize safety by facilitating virtual appointments. Furthermore, our health and safety program incorporates a robust set of policies and protocols. These include an accessible customer service plan, staff training initiatives, and an annually reviewed Code of Conduct, prominently displayed for patient reference. Additionally, we maintain a suite of Health and Safety-related policies and forms, including incident report forms utilized by both staff and patients.

Moreover, our clinic boasts a comprehensive emergency plan, complete with an emergency color code system for simplified staff comprehension during crises. To reinforce staff readiness in emergency scenarios, each monthly team meeting includes a review of a different color code.

Recognizing a gap in our incident reporting process, we have implemented a refined approach. Our new clinical and clerical incident reporting process involves a fillable form, ensuring accurate documentation of incidents.

POPULATION HEALTH APPROACH

At the Algoma Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic, we are committed to promoting health and preventing diseases through population health approaches in collaboration with our partners.

Firstly, we conduct chronic pain education sessions for individuals living with chronic pain, providing them with the knowledge and resources to manage their condition effectively.

Secondly, in partnership with the Algoma Ontario Health Team, we offer healthy aging education sessions aimed at helping the elderly live independently at home for as long as possible, enhancing their quality of life and well-being.

Additionally, we organize cervical cancer screening campaigns twice a year for the eligible population without a primary care provider, ensuring access to preventive healthcare services and early detection of cervical cancer. These campaigns are conducted in collaboration with the Algoma Ontario Health Team to reach a broader audience and maximize impact.

Lastly, we provide primary care services for at-risk youth without a primary care provider in partnership with Algoma Family Services. Our goal is to offer medical services directly where the marginalized population is located, ensuring equitable access to healthcare for vulnerable youth. Through these initiatives, we strive to address health disparities and improve the overall health outcomes of our community.

CONTACT INFORMATION/DESIGNATED LEAD

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SIGN-OFF

It is recommended that the following individuals review and sign-off on your organization's Quality Improvement Plan (where applicable):

I have reviewed and approved our organization's Quality Improvement Plan on

Board Chair

Quality Committee Chair or delegate

Executive Director/Administrative Lead

Other leadership as appropriate
