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Innovative Information Technology Solutions Facilitates 25% Reduction in Readmission Rates at El Camino Hospital

ANN ARBOR, MI, June 27, 2013 – The combined use of data analytics and advanced telecommunications has helped El Camino Hospital in Mountain View, Calif. achieve a dramatic 25% drop in patient readmissions.

A case study by the College of Healthcare Information Management Executives (CHIME) details how El Camino Hospital is using information technology to influence readmission reductions – far below the national average – while taking patient care to the next level.

El Camino Hospital accomplished this important advance by focusing on enhanced communication and care coordination with sub-acute providers through the use of telepresence, which is a sophisticated, lifelike, two-way videoconferencing solution. When patients are admitted to a hospital and then transitioned into a long-term care facility, hospital personnel and staff at the long-term care facility engage in regular telepresence sessions to exchange patient information and allow continuing hospital involvement in post-discharge care. This enables El Camino Hospital's transition team to collaborate with the nurses, administrators, and social workers of the long-term care facilities that care for the hospital's recently discharged patients.

"Nurses that are caring for patients who have been transitioned to the nursing home now feel like they are better connected to their patient and also to the prior caregiver," said Greg Walton, CIO at El Camino Hospital. "They realize that someone is paying attention to the patient's status post discharge, and the communication level is vastly improved."

El Camino Hospital's telepresence program, which began last July, now partners with two long-term care facilities and is currently in the process of adding two more.

"Having these meetings face-to-face really changes the dynamic of the interaction," said Mae Lavente, the nurse practitioner who is the hospital's point of contact for questions on discharged patients. Ms. Lavente also participates in all the telepresence meetings.

The hospital has also been able to use statistical analysis of its data to identify patients at high risk for readmissions. Its research has identified demographic information that is highly accurate in identifying high-risk patients early in their hospitalization – typically immediately after admission – and allows the institution to alert the healthcare team who is providing care for the admitted patient.

"El Camino Hospital has added a banner across a patient's medical record indicating whether the patient is at low, moderate or high risk for readmission," said Pat Kearns, MD, medical director of El Camino Hospital's Senior Health Center. "This information enables caregivers to intervene early and plan accordingly," he said. "With individualized analysis, we can apply a program that is most appropriate for a specific patient."

Stratification of readmission risk, and acting on that knowledge to intervene with patients most likely to be readmitted, has resulted in a 25 percent reduction in El Camino Hospital's readmission rate.

Collaboration Using Telepresence Leads to Lower Readmission Rates is the fourth in a series of case studies by CHIME, an Ann Arbor, Mich.-based professional organization, which highlights the benefits and best practices of successful implementations of information technology. To access the full case study, visit: www.cio-chime.org/chime/press/CaseStudy/ElCamino_Case_Study.pdf.

About CHIME
The College of Healthcare Information Management Executives (CHIME) is an executive organization dedicated to serving chief information officers and other senior healthcare IT leaders. With more than 1,400 CIO members and over 95 healthcare IT vendors and professional services firms, CHIME provides a highly interactive, trusted environment enabling senior professional and industry leaders to collaborate; exchange best practices; address professional development needs; and advocate the effective use of information management to improve the health and healthcare in the communities they serve. For more information, please visit www.cio-chime.org.

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