

Title: "Integrated Outcomes in Outpatient Healthcare"

"Outcomes measurement"--i.e., to influence medical decisions of the present and future with the actual results of medical interventions made previously is not as simple as it is compelling. Although inpatient outcome data is available, outpatient outcome data is not. It is difficult, if not impossible, to find any data that is systematically captured regarding the outcomes of outpatients that is suitable for widespread use in medical decision support. Reasons for this include the cost of soliciting outpatient information, the reply rates associated with requests for such information, and the manageability of responses given the limited ability of the patient to articulate useful and reliable medical information. A complete feedback loop that does accomplish this, mediated by commonly available technology, is proposed. A framework of expert system and e-mail (or mail) collects information from the patient in a systematic way that maintains the reliability and usefulness of timely information on the results of medical intervention in outpatient care. This framework integrates outcomes into healthcare delivery and extends the capacity of health care services to measure outcomes with a minimum investment by both patient and care giver. Using e-mail and expert system components, well-timed structured queries collect information methodically. The queries are easy to understand and require only moments of patient time to answer. Replies are automatically entered in the medical record. Health care providers are prompted with recommended responses according to practice-chosen policies. The result potential: unprecedented information, with more consistency and earlier notice, yet highly organized and cost minimized.

Author: Duane Steward, DVM, MSIE, PhD
dsteward@mail.ucf.edu
Doctoral Program in Public Affairs
Coll of Health and Public Affairs
Univ Central Florida

407 230-6081 (Cell)
10521 Via Del Sol
Orlando, Florida 32817