

Enhance Patient Experience Through Childbirth Education

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Geisinger

Abstract

The childbirth education program at Geisinger has been established for over 30 years. The program has expanded over the years as the organization continues to grow. Currently, childbirth classes are offered at seven sites.

Childbirth education is a way to prepare women for their pregnancy, labor, birth, and new parenthood. Childbirth education positively impacts patient experience, allowing patients to feel part of their care by making informed decisions about their labor and birth. Women that participate in childbirth education feel more prepared for their labor and birth. Women report a more positive experience after attending childbirth class than women who do not.

Geisinger struggles with low attendance at their childbirth classes and reimbursement in class fees at all sites leading to a change in the program.

Problem

The childbirth education program at Geisinger is experiencing low volumes in classes being offered. Childbirth classes have been cancelled due to poor attendance. Patient satisfaction with the labor and birth experience begins during the pregnancy. Childbirth class is an opportunity to set realistic expectations about the delivery hospital, labor and birth experience, and length of stay. Attending class makes patients more engaged in their care and are more likely to actively participate in medical decisions (Meeks, 2016).

Prior to July of 2018, patients would need to call an appointment line to schedule a childbirth class, or schedule it at a prenatal appointment with a patient access representative (PAR). Despite scheduling guidelines and communications from this author to the phone scheduling staff and the PAR staff, some employees taking calls were not familiar with how to schedule a patient for a class.

Difficulty scheduling a childbirth class was identified as a contributor to low attendance to childbirth class. Revenue from childbirth class was also not consistently captured with the prior process. Switching to an online format to collect payments and register patients for class would both ease the scheduling process and increase revenue for the childbirth education program.

Problem

Beginning in July of 2018, an online registration and payment process began at Geisinger. This process allows patients to register and pay for a childbirth class at their convenience.

Leading up to the change, any patient that scheduled a class prior to July, 2018 was contacted by phone, secure patient messaging, and with a letter by mail detailing the new registration process, patients were required to go online, register and pay for their class before attending.

Patient feedback during this process was positive. Not paying up front for classes was a patient dissatisfier.

Pregnant women receive a “pocket-guide” during pregnancy that provides a description of each class offered through the childbirth education program.

An email address for childbirth education was created as a communication method for patients and the coordinator.

Geisinger

Childbirth education at Geisinger



Evaluation and Outcomes

- Patient feedback through updated class survey
- Online contact information for coordinator
- E-mail address for childbirth education program
- Revenue tracking
- Class attendance tracking
- Increase in revenue for first two months as compared to prior year

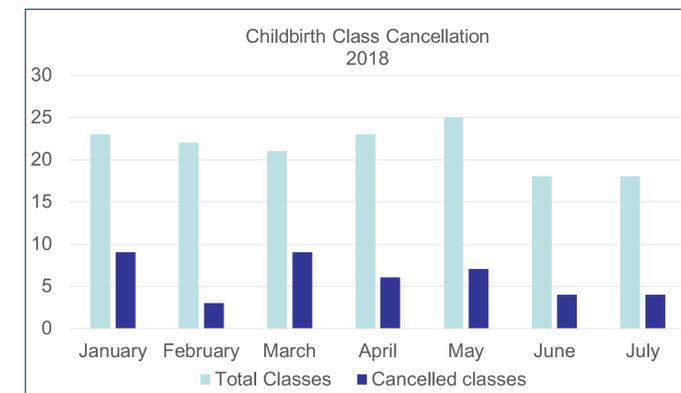
Program Goals

- Increase the number of women that attend childbirth classes
- Provide a user-friendly registration and payment process for the childbirth education program
- Decrease cancellation of classes
- Help women feel prepared for labor and birth through evidenced-based education
- Enhance patient experience through educational opportunities
- Increase revenue of the childbirth education program

The goal of this new process is to increase the number of women that attend childbirth classes. Geisinger will be tracking the metrics associated with volumes in the classes, looking to see if the classes are full and if wait lists are needed.

Right now, classes are being cancelled due to poor attendance; the new process will make it easier for patients to find a class and schedule at their convenience. The new format will allow Geisinger to get feedback from patients which will help us finetune the program to meet the needs of our patients and create a positive patient experience.

In addition, we will track the revenue the program brings in. Comparisons from FY18 to FY19 will help assess success of the new process.



References

1. Meeks, R. (2016). Expectation setting during the prenatal period: A key to satisfaction. *International Journal of Childbirth Education*, 31(4), 33-36.