



2013 HYPERTENSION CONTROL CHAMPION: THEDACARE

Million Hearts®—Success in Blood Pressure Control

FAST FACTS

ThedaCare's Patient Population

- Serves 100,357 adult patients in northeast Wisconsin.
- 28% have high blood pressure.
- 2% belong to a racial or ethnic minority.
- 3% are eligible for Medicaid.



The ThedaCare health care team. Credit: Jeff Lendrum Photography.

Hypertension, also called high blood pressure, is the leading clinical diagnosis at ThedaCare—a health care system located in Appleton, Wisconsin—meaning far too many patients are living with an increased risk for heart attack and stroke. For years, ThedaCare clinicians have been working to lower the burden of high blood pressure for their patients. From 2012 to 2013, ThedaCare increased its hypertension control rate from 81.6% to 83%, earning recognition as a 2013 Million Hearts® Hypertension Control Champion. To achieve this improvement, ThedaCare used standardized processes throughout the patient care process, from measuring blood pressure to ensuring timely follow-up care.

WHAT WE DID

- **Implemented consistent, strategic use of electronic health records (EHRs).** ThedaCare's EHR system generated worksheets that marked patients who were overdue for blood pressure checks, whose last reading was elevated, or both. Updated daily, all providers and staff could access this information and follow up with patients. Additionally, ThedaCare provided monthly, color-coded results, searchable by provider, location, and care group, to show goal progress.

- **Provided financial incentives for physicians.**

ThedaCare tied physician pay to performance on key quality measures, including hypertension control, meaning physicians had clinical and financial motivation to lower their patients' blood pressure using multiple strategies.

- **Promoted patient self-measured blood pressure monitoring.** ThedaCare created and implemented a patient self-management program, Under Pressure, to help adults with hypertension aged 60 years and older learn new self-management skills. About 70% of the patients who enrolled in the program reached their target blood pressure, compared with 64% of patients who opted out.

WHAT WE ACCOMPLISHED

ThedaCare's strategies led to an improvement in its hypertension control rate from 81.6% in July 2012 to 83% in July 2013, meaning that in 2013, about 23,136 of ThedaCare's 27,879 patients with high blood pressure had the condition under control.

Organization Information for ThedaCare

Web site: www.thedacare.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/ThedaCare

Twitter: @thedacarehealth

Phone: 920-831-1807

Address: P.O. Box 8025, Appleton, WI 54912

WHAT WE LEARNED

Success Factors

For others looking to improve practicewide hypertension control rates, ThedaCare recommends

1. Standardizing processes after carefully reviewing each step in the patient interaction process and identifying possible improvements. Use protocols to help providers measure and track blood pressure effectively for consistent follow-up.
2. Getting buy-in from clinicians around a process for managing hypertension that aligns with their everyday challenges and routines.
3. Emphasizing the importance of accuracy and consistency with staff members who measure blood pressure and explaining the importance of hypertension control.

“Any patient with hypertension is at risk for debilitating diseases in the future, so it’s important that we get them under control and help them understand why it’s important.”

—Dan Collins, quality director

BARRIERS AND CHALLENGES

Given the many competing priorities clinicians face each day, adherence to consistent procedures for taking blood pressure can be challenging. To address this barrier, ThedaCare provided clinician training on blood pressure measurement, and health care teams met regularly to discuss disease management and address barriers or concerns.

WHAT WE ARE DOING NOW

ThedaCare is launching digital tools to support patients in self-management of their high blood pressure, such as e-mails from physicians, with the goal of reducing the need for in-person visits.

	Ideal	Date / /	Date / /
Blood Pressure	<120/80		
Fasting Blood Sugar	< 100		
Total Cholesterol	<200		
HDL (Good) Cholesterol	>60		
LDL (Bad) Cholesterol	<100		
Weight & BMI	18.5 – 24.9	Wt BMI	Wt BMI
Waist Size	M: <40" W: <35"		

Card developed by Chesire Medical Center/Dartmouth-Hitchcock Kiene and The Prevention Research Center at Dartmouth.

To Control your High Blood Pressure you need to... Know Your Numbers June 2011 Edition

Screenshot of ThedaCare’s EHR patient worksheet. Credit: ThedaCare.