Abstract

Rapid and continuous advancements in the healthcare industry in care delivery, patient-clinician interaction, and clinical information exchanges have introduced a new level of challenges (Chee et al., 2017). If these challenges can be addressed we could realize positive impacts for both care outcome quality and cost. Health information technologies, in particular EMRs(electronic medical records) have the potential to be utilized to enhance clinical communication and collaboration and address many of these challenges. An essential component in healthcare systems is integration of care services that relies on collaboration, communication, and information exchange between clinicians, patients, and caregivers. Healthcare integration highlights care coordination principles that seek to improve care efficiency and value by connecting/matching all stakeholders and their needs appropriately. To optimize the integration process, a team approach must be developed that emphasizes on the empowerment of care coordination strategies that are embedded within EMR systems. This approach will extend the use of commonly adopted EMR systems to cover clinical communication and improve efficiency. There are many established definitions for care coordination with some focused on a certain portion of the patient population or certain disease categories. Care coordination in its simplest form means delivering appropriate care, at the right time, in the right setting (McDonald, et al., 2007). To this end, care coordination is identifying all contributing stakeholders in the process of care; determining their needs, roles, and expectations; and establishing clear communication methods between stakeholders that distributes care-relevant information but also prioritizing care tasks. Care-relevant information must be validated, authenticated, organized, and delivered as actionable data (steps) to their proper destinations. We propose an approach for using technology to support care co-ordination (figure 1) and plan to test this framework in various healthcare contexts.

References
