

Jefferson Lansdale Hospital, VMSC form Community Paramedicine Partnership

One-year pilot program focuses on patients with chronic medical conditions at high-risk for hospital readmission

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Jefferson Lansdale Hospital is located at 100 Medical Campus Drive, Lansdale, PA 19446. (Photo courtesy of Jefferson Lansdale Hospital)

LANSDALE — Jefferson Lansdale Hospital and VMSC Emergency Medical

Services (VMSC) announced Monday the Community Paramedicine Partnership, a one-year pilot program aimed at reducing the number of patients readmitted to the hospital within 30 days of being discharged.

According to the Pennsylvania Healthcare Cost Containment Council, millions of dollars are spent each year in Pennsylvania for Medicare and Medicaid patients who are readmitted to the hospital within 30 days of their hospital stay. Hospital readmissions are also associated with unfavorable patient outcomes.

Responding to this, the Community Paramedicine Partnership will follow consenting patients with chronic medical conditions including congestive heart failure (CHF) and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) who are at high-risk for readmission to the hospital.

Jefferson Lansdale Hospital will provide a referral to VMSC for consenting patients who score high on the EPIC Readmission Risk Score, an electronic health record-based readmission risk model. A specially trained, board-certified Community Paramedic will visit the patient within 24 hours of discharge and will make up to three additional home visits to these patients within the first 30 days after discharge.

The Community Paramedic will provide a health and home assessment, confirm patients are complying with discharge instructions, and consult with a physician about any changes in patient status as needed, utilizing the advanced patient tracking/charting software "HealthCall." They may also reach out to local providers to schedule follow-up appointments and clarify medication orders.

"We know that many patients at high-risk for readmission, do not qualify for home health services after discharge, and other outpatient chronic care management programs are limited," said Katie Farrell, vice president,

Jefferson Lansdale Hospital. “We believe the Community Paramedicine Partnership program will help reduce unnecessary trips to the emergency department, reduce readmission to the hospital, and improve our patients’ quality of life.”

Studies have shown that mobile integrated health service programs like the newly formed Community Paramedicine Partnership, have been successful at preventing a deterioration of health and reducing preventable hospital readmissions for high-risk patients.

“We’re excited to partner with Jefferson Lansdale Hospital to help address the issue of hospital readmission,” said Shane Wheeler, CEO of VMSC, “The Community Paramedicine Partnership program is just one more way VMSC is making a positive impact on the communities we serve.”

Drs. Jon Sutter, Director of the Jefferson Lansdale Hospital Hospitalist Program, and Ryan Overberger, VMSC Medical Director, will provide medical oversight for the Community Paramedicine Partnership program. The pilot program is being funded for one-year by a Jefferson Abington Hospital Innovator’s Circle Grant.