

A social needs screening tool facilitates reduced length of stay and total encounter cost for surgical patients

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BACKGROUND

The primary objective of this study was to implement a social needs screening tool amongst patients undergoing surgery and measure its impact on length of stay (LOS) and total direct cost.

METHODS

- 1. Single institution prospective cohort study where staff members utilized a social needs screening tool (Figure 1) for patients undergoing surgery in seven surgical specialties from 7/1/2020 to 6/30/2021.
- 2. Referral to Social Work Services was conducted if the patient reported a resource deficiency.
- 3. Length of stay (LOS) and total direct cost were collected for each encounter and compared to a Control Group of patients.

RESULTS

- There were no significant differences in age, gender, and race among the three groups.
- Median and average LOS was lower in the Provided Social Work Support Group compared to the Control Group (Table 2).
- The median and average direct cost was lower in the Provided Social Work Support Group than in the Control Group (Table 2).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The implementation of a social needs screening tool reduces length of stay and total direct cost for surgical patients, optimizing comprehensive healthcare delivery.

Figure 1: Process Map for Social Needs Screening

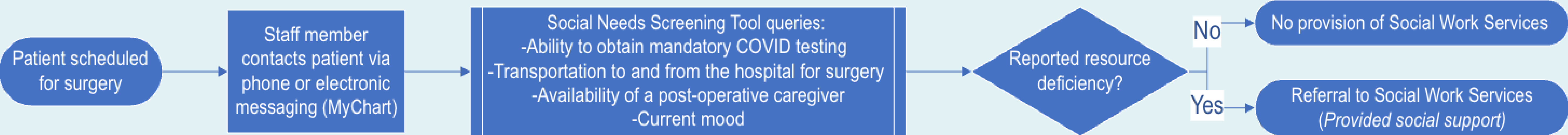
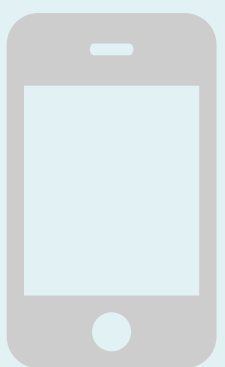


Table 2: Length of Stay (LOS) Outcomes and Costs

	<i>Controls (1/1/19 – 2/28/20)</i>	<i>Screen-eligible (7/1/20 – 6/30/21)</i>	<i>Provided social support (7/1/20 – 6/30/21)</i>
LOS observed (median)	2	2	1
LOS observed (average)	3.58	3.3	2.67
Direct Cost Per Case (median)	\$18,192.81	\$18,302.00	\$11,660.70
Direct Cost Per Case (average)	\$30,083.94	\$31,175.28	\$20,405.75
Case Mix Index	3.49	3.52	3.42



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