

AdventHealth North Pinellas Diversity Equity & Inclusion Patient Focused Project

In 2022 AdventHealth North Pinellas examined areas where there were discrepancies in the health outcomes of their patients based upon different demographics. One outstanding area was in the hospital readmission rates for females with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, better known as COPD. Between 2019-2021 women with COPD were almost 50% more likely to readmit to the hospital than were their male counterparts. COPD is a long-term lung condition that gets worse over time. Its major symptom is difficulty breathing. Each flare up can further damage the lungs and patients often end up in the hospital for treatment.

In 2023 AdventHealth North Pinellas started the COPD Rescue Kit project. The Kits contain the medications to manage a flare up quickly by having them on hand. They are different from the daily meds a COPD patient takes on a regular basis to manage their symptoms. A flare up is a surge in symptoms beyond what is normally being experienced. Symptoms worsen and do not resolve. They are designed to address that flare up so the patient can potentially avoid another hospitalization. This helps reduce hospital readmissions.

Patients going home with the rescue kit are educated on its use by our respiratory therapy team. Our readmission coordinator follows up with patients to make sure they received their rescue kit and know how and when to use it. While the kit is available to all patients, not just women, we are seeing a better rate of avoiding hospitalizations with the women who get the COPD Rescue Kits. This is just one of the projects going on at AdventHealth North Pinellas to address the needs of our different patient populations.

