Background

- Advance directives are mandated by the Patient Self Determination act to be offered and explained to patients upon entrance to any hospital facility.

- The benefit of advanced care planning (ACP) have been shown to improve patient autonomy, prevent unnecessary procedures and prevent unwanted hospitalizations. Despite the benefits, advance directive completion in a clinic setting is low.

- Previous research has shown that lack of time, limited physician training and patients hesitance to discuss the issue contribute to low completion rate.

- Due to the importance of ACP in patient care, our goal is to increase awareness for patients and residents at the Family Health Center (FHC).

Methods

Setting: Family Health Center (FHC), a residency training site consisting of 37 residents in an urban, low income, minority section of San Antonio, Texas. FHC serves approximately 1600 patients on a yearly basis. Patient demographics are Hispanic 69.5%, Anglo 14.2%, African American 9.6%, Asian 2.1% and Native American 3.4% respectively.

Methods: Pre and Post-intervention data is collected by electronic medical record review of patient charts from specified clinic visits. During our enrollment period, patients > 55 years old were identified and given a patient questionnaire. The patient questionnaire identifies patients knowledge concerning advance directives and their interest in speaking with their doctor. Questionnaires were made in a yes/no format to easily compute statistics by excel spreadsheet by using the value of 1 for circled answers.

Intervention:

- Patient education
  - Patient questionnaire to determine patient knowledge base and encourage physician discussion
- Resident education
  - Informed on types of advance directives
  - Cause and effect of having an advance directive
  - How to communicate with a patient concerning advance directives
  - Internet resources for patients
  - Cultural influences on end of life wishes
- Advance directive completion
  - Created specific clinic visits with increased time length for advance directives
  - Created protocol for documenting advance directive completion and discussion on EMR
  - Resident gift card incentive for highest completion rates

Results

- Patient Questionnaire Preliminary Results
  - Data based on n=100
  - Discrepancies based on patients not answering some questions

- Advance Directive Completion Rates
  - Pre-intervention AD completion in August 2013 – 0 total
  - Data for AD completion in March 2014 – 13 total

Future Directions

- Perform EMR review of advance directive completions and discussions
- Provide post-intervention resident survey on their attitudes towards ACP
- Improve logistic obstacles to increase advance directive completion at the FHC