Identifying Medication Access Barriers for Rare and Complex Disease Patients within the Pharmacy Hub Space

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Background

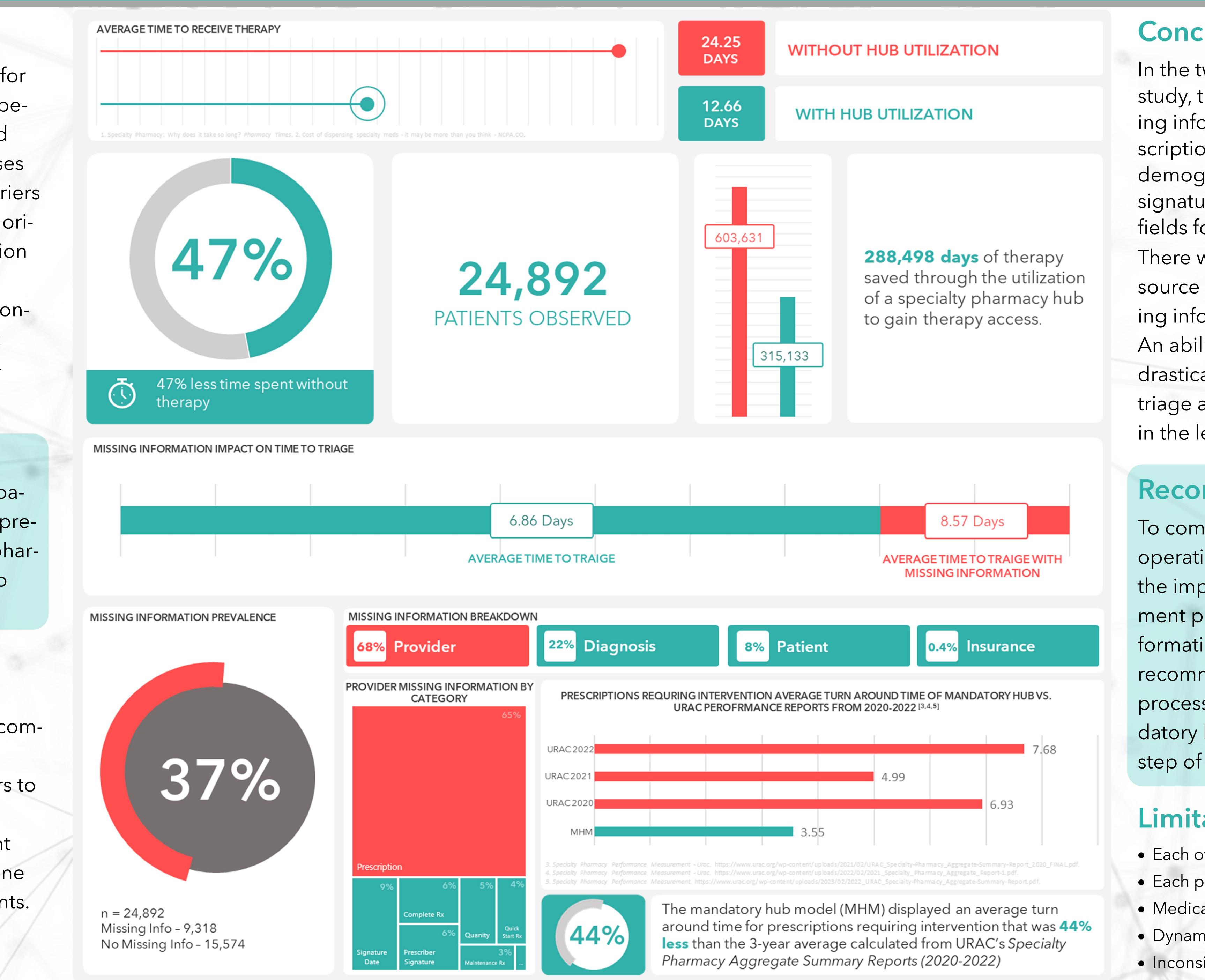
Identification and management of medication access barriers for complex and rare disease patients is an essential function of specialty pharmacy hubs. Medication access can be a complicated path. Continual introspection into the key data driving processes of a hub is essential to maintain efficiency, and innovation. Barriers such as missing information, benefits investigations, prior authorizations, and strict business rules are constantly evolving. Solution development requires an in-depth knowledge and analysis of these processes. This study aims to serve as a foundation for continual assessment and intervention for maximization of patient medication access through hub operated patient support programs.

Objective

The purpose of this study is to identify barriers present in the patient journey through a pharmacy hub that delay triage of the prescription referral to a non-commercial pharmacy or specialty pharmacy and recommend solutions that improve patient access to therapy.

Methods

A retrospective analysis of data generated from four rare and complex disease patient support programs between 1/1/2020-12/1/2022 will be utilized to identify the most common barriers to patient medication access and the associated time it takes for those patients to be triaged to the filling pharmacy. The patient support programs consist of three neurology programs, and one oncology program and include both pediatric and adult patients.



Conclusion

In the two years analyzed during this retrospective observational study, the most prevalent barrier affecting time to triage was missing information. Amidst all observed programs, 37% of triaged prescriptions experienced some form of missing information. Patient demographics, patient signature, provider demographics, provider signature, and prescription dosing were among the numerous fields found to consistently be absent throughout all programs. There was a stark difference in the distribution of information source between patients and healthcare providers. 68% of all missing information instances were contributed by healthcare providers. An ability to cut down on the prevalence of missing information will drastically improve a pharmacy hub's already enhanced ability to triage and patients to their first commercial dispense of medication in the least amount of time.

Recommendations

To combat the prevalence of missing information and maximize the operational efficiency of patient support programs at a hub level, the implementation of a patient/provider portal or electronic enrollment process that strategically manages completion of required information sections before allowing progression would be a strong recommendation for a hub looking to shorten its time to triage. A process which could most easily be implemented through a mandatory hub model that permits complete control and insight at each step of the patient journey.

Limitations

- Each of the programs had different patient population size.
- Each program treated vastly different categories of disease.
- Medication cost varied across all programs.
- Dynamic data reporting methods were utilized across programs.
- Inconsistent ability to identify and eliminate outliers and insignificant data points.