

# Silver Award Project Utility

**Facility:** Dialysis Clinic, Inc--Mexico

**Silver Award User:** Suzanne Hemmann

**Project Status:** Active

## 1. Description of Project:

Patients were awarded a snowball for each completed treatment during a seven week period so as to build their arsenal in the clinic's Snowball Fight.

## 2. Outcomes Measured:

Because LCSW is not in the clinic every day, the task of awarding snowballs was completed by the unit clerk. Since DCI pts must sign an AMA form if they terminate treatment more than 10 minutes early, the most efficient way to give pts credit for a completed treatment was to award a snowball to those without an AMA form.

## 3. Summary of Outcomes/Results:

Twenty one patients had "perfect attendance" and were entered into the drawing. The shift/team with the largest arsenal of snowballs(completed treatments divided by number of patients that shift) was second shift on MWF. They were treated with popcorn "snowballs." The remaining patients were interviewed by the social worker to identify reasons for missed or shortened treatments and what the dialysis clinic might do to reduce them.

## 4. Impact on Patients:

This project was designed to make a visual statement about how often patients skipped or shortened treatments. This was achieved by the large display of accumulating snowballs on the wall. Patients with perfect attendance appreciated the recognition of their efforts, while the remaining patients became aware of how it really is possible. Patients oftentimes have difficulty comprehending the cumulative impact of skipping "every once in a while" and/or shortening treatments by "just a few minutes." LCSW used data from flowsheets to compute the total number of missed minutes during the tracking period and presented this to patients in terms of the percent of time in treatment according to their individual prescription. This was then compared to money: "Attending dialysis 90% of the time might sound pretty good. But what if someone owed you \$100 and gave you only \$90? What if they did this every month?" The patients were able to relate to this comparison and most accepted that even minutes count. Regarding reasons for missing or shortening treatments, a significant number involved diarrhea or loose stools and either skipping dialysis or having to use the bathroom during treatment and not wanting to resume dialysis. Patients are now being instructed to have bowel issues evaluated. Patients reporting anxiety and/or depressed feelings are being referred to mental health providers.

## 5. Lessons Learned:

Additional info:

Snowball Fight!!

Mexico DCI

On 11-15-21, a wall in the clinic began displaying one snowball (a 2 inch circle of white paper) for each complete treatment for each patient. Patients are being challenged to build their arsenal of snowballs. Patients are identified by a random number so they can see how their snowballs are accumulating.

Patients are divided into four "teams" by their dialysis day and shift and the winning team will be awarded a popcorn snowball. (Recipe to be provided by the renal dietitian and prepared by the social worker.) The number of snowballs divided by the number of patients on the team will be used as shifts are not equal. As we expect several patients to complete all their treatments, their names will be put into a raffle for a prize per shift. This prize will be a winter care basket of lotion, lip balm, mittens and a room humidifier.

Snowballs are now going up and the patients are beginning to get curious. Staff will meet with each patient during the first two full weeks of December to introduce them to the project. Our first goal will be to express to all patients the importance of getting their entire treatment of dialysis just as they would other prescribed medicines or therapy. During the second half of December, the second goal will be to educate patients on how often they are missing or shortening treatment by identifying those patients whose snowball arsenal is small. Staff will explore with these patients the **reasons** for skipping or shortening treatments with the third goal of educating patients not only on the impact of missing or shortening dialysis but also possible options to address issues with transportation, bowel issues, sitting discomfort, etc.

The accumulation of snowballs will end on January 3, 2022. At this time the project's goal is to visually display how often shortened and skipped treatments are occurring. Using it to measure improvement is an option.

