New Survey from Vizient Provides Insights from the Front Lines of the Opioid Epidemic

IRVING, Texas--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Vizient, Inc. has released findings from a new survey of over 90 member hospital and health system leaders across the country about how they are coping with the opioid crisis. Specifically, the survey looks at what changes hospitals are implementing, what is working and the challenges to manage resources effectively in the face of the opioid crisis.

The survey's findings demonstrate a clear effort by hospitals to take the proper steps needed in provider/patient education and resources. Nearly two-thirds (64 percent) of hospitals have increased investment in opioid medication management in the last 12 months. The most commonly implemented programs included:

- Prescriber education (78 percent)
- New technologies to monitor prescribing (56 percent)
- New alternatives for acute pain management (54 percent)
- Prescriber limits on dosage/quantities (44 percent)
- Safe disposal of old medications (43 percent)
- Opioid stewardship program (33 percent)

Dosage guidelines for acute care patients upon discharge received the best reviews with 74 percent of those from facilities that have put them in place. Staff who adopted the new dosage guidelines feel the new rules were extremely or very effective. Adding new staff to help manage the opioid epidemic (67 percent) and new technologies to monitor opioid prescribing (50 percent) were the next two most effective.

Highlights from the survey can be accessed online here.

"The process changes hospitals have implemented on the front lines of the opioid epidemic are beginning to play their part in curbing abuse and misuse," said Jim Lichauer, project manager, performance improvement collaboratives and advisory for Vizient. "Equally important is the need to create a culture within hospitals that understands and is sensitive to substance abuse disorders, especially opioids. This is a critical component of managing these patients and this national crisis. Strong organizational leadership that promotes and supports evidence-based pain management programs and those caring for those patients is essential to establishing the appropriate culture."

Additional highlights from the survey include:

- Hospitals being forced to reallocate resources to deal with the opioid crisis.
- While 47.8 percent of respondents see patients who show drug seeking behaviors multiple times per day, daily or nearly every day, 78 percent of respondents said the opioid crisis has not affected their ability to serve patients.
- Patient wait times and physician and facility workload are increasing – 29 percent reported that the increased volume of opioid-related admissions are causing longer wait times for all patients.

Through its collaboration with member hospitals and industry experts, Vizient promotes the value of opioid stewardship in hospitals, such as employing effective pain management techniques, using treatment alternatives to decrease the amount of opioids being prescribed and identifying educational resources for clinicians to help them understand and address the opioid epidemic in their communities.

About Vizient, Inc.

Vizient, Inc., the largest member-driven health care performance improvement company in the country, provides innovative data-driven solutions, expertise and collaborative opportunities that lead to improved patient outcomes and lower costs. Vizient’s diverse membership base includes academic medical centers, pediatric facilities, community hospitals, integrated health delivery networks and non-acute health care providers and represents approximately $100 billion in annual purchasing volume. The Vizient brand identity represents the integration of VHA Inc., University HealthSystem Consortium and
Novation, which combined in 2015, as well as MedAssets’ Spend and Clinical Resource Management (SCM) segment, including Sg2, which was acquired in 2016. In 2018, Vizient again received a World’s Most Ethical Company designation from the Ethisphere Institute. Vizient’s headquarters are in Irving, Texas, with locations in Chicago and other cities across the United States. Please visit www.vizientinc.com [18] as well as our newsroom [19], blog [20], Twitter [21], LinkedIn [22] and YouTube [23] pages for more information about the company.

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@Vizientinc releases findings from new survey of hospital leaders from across the country about how they are coping with the opioid crisis.


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