DGIM Project Summary

Name of project:
Portal-based Assessment for Genitourinary Evaluation (PAGE)

Investigators:
Alison Huang, MD, Associate Professor of Medicine (Principal Investigator)
Tami Rowen, MD, Assistant Professor of Obstetrics & Gynecology (Co-Investigator)
Miriam Kupperman, PhD, Professor of Obstetrics & Gynecology (Co-Investigator)

Research objectives:
- To develop an electronic patient portal-based intervention to promote more systematic recognition and evidence-based management of postmenopausal genitourinary symptoms.
- To examine the feasibility of implementing this intervention in a general medicine practice and collect preliminary data on its impact on rates of discussion, evaluation, and treatment or referral.

Background/significance:
Genitourinary symptoms are a common and distressing consequence of menopause, but many postmenopausal women suffering from these symptoms go undiagnosed and untreated. Patients may avoid consulting a provider because they are embarrassed, are anxious about undergoing evaluation, or do not realize that their symptoms may be treatable. Providers may lack time during brief clinic visits, may not be familiar with evidence-based evaluation, or may not appreciate the impact of these symptoms on women’s day-to-day lives.

Eligibility criteria:
- Established female patient in the UCSF General Medicine Practice at 1545 Divisadero St.
- At least 45 years of age (based on date of birth in the APEX database)
- Scheduled for a visit in ≥2 weeks with one of 4 voluntary sentinel providers in the practice
- Actively enrolled in the UCSF MyChart patient portal (personally, not as proxy)
- Report being postmenopausal, having at least one genitourinary symptom, and desiring more information or treatment for symptoms via the MyChart screening questionnaire

Summary of procedures:
This project involves an electronic screening questionnaire designed to be administered to female patients aged 45 years and older through the MyChart patient portal. If a patient indicates via the MyChart questionnaire that she is postmenopausal, is experiencing bothersome genitourinary symptoms, and desires more information or treatment, she will receive brief follow-up patient education information directly through MyChart as part of the intervention. An electronic summary of her responses will also be incorporated into her APEX medical record, and will be forwarded (along with information about practice support information) to the electronic message basket of her primary care provider.

During phase 1 of the project (alpha-testing), our team has been developing the content and format of the electronic screening questionnaire and follow-up patient education and provider advisory materials. We have been refining these materials based on feedback from 10 postmenopausal women with genitourinary symptoms and 10 primary care providers who have volunteered to pre-test materials (to be completed by the end of December, 2014).

During phase 2 (beta testing), we plan to field-test procedures for implementing this intervention among a small subset of female patients aged 45 years or older who have upcoming scheduled visits with a voluntary set of 4 providers in the practice (Nicole Appelle, Jeff Tice, Kate Wrenn, Jeremy Tietjens). Approximately 1 to 3 weeks before scheduled visits, a project analyst will send each potentially eligible patient an invitation to complete the questionnaire through MyChart. Patients who complete the questionnaire, report
postmenopausal genitourinary symptoms, indicate a desire for more information or treatment, and then complete their scheduled clinic visit (tracked by the project analyst) will be invited to complete an electronic feedback survey (administered separately through REDCap) within one week of their visit, to share their impressions on the impact of the intervention. With patients' and providers' permission, the project team will also review electronic records of clinic visits to track rates of discussion, evaluation, treatment, and referral for symptoms.

**Benefits/burden for participants:**
Participation in this project may help postmenopausal female patients to obtain evidence-based information, evaluation, and treatment for bothersome genitourinary symptoms. A small amount of time and effort will be required to complete the screening questionnaire and feedback survey. Patients will be reassured that they may decline to take part without this having any impact on their ability to obtain care from the practice. Participants will receive $20 gift cards in return for completing the survey, and $20 for consenting to medical record review.

**Any benefits or burden to DGIM practitioners?**
The four DGIM practitioners who have volunteered to serve as the sentinel group for beta-testing may find it informative and helpful to receive targeted practice support information about postmenopausal genitourinary symptoms that will enhance their professional competency. On the other hand, it may sometimes be inconvenient or burdensome if patients raise concerns about genitourinary symptoms at visits that were originally intended to address other health problems. To minimize burden on providers, we will only target patients with pre-scheduled follow-up or annual visits, not acute problem-based visits. We have designed our provider advisory bulletins to include APEX smartphrases and smartsets to make it easier for providers to evaluate, manage, and document symptoms. Our patient education materials have specifically been designed to manage patient expectations by cautioning them that if there is not sufficient time to address their symptoms at their next visit, their provider may choose to schedule another visit for this purpose, or refer them to a specialist (e.g., gynecologist or urogynecologist).

**Timeline for recruitment (projected start and stop dates):**
Expected dates for beta-testing phase: February, 2015 through June, 2015

**Funding source:**
Northern American Menopause Society / Pfizer Independent Grants for Learning and Change program (competitive RFA awarded in 2014)

**Potential for DGIM collaborators?**
The principal investigator is a DGIM faculty member, and other DGIM faculty, fellows, and residents are taking part in the pre-testing phase to develop the project materials.

**Do you agree to notify us when recruitment is completed?**
Certainly!

**Date form completed:**
12/7/2014