



COMMUNITY PARAMEDIC IN-HOME BLOOD TRANSFUSION PROGRAM

The travel involved in accessing transfusions and the time spent receiving transfusions while in hospital are often stressful experiences and can be barriers to receiving care. The Calgary Zone Community Paramedic Program realized this and decided to do something about it. They initiated a program, which included an education package with online modules, classroom instruction, clinical rotation, and hands on training, all to allow in-home blood transfusions to improve access and the patient's experience.

To ensure this service was responsive and respectful to the preferences and expectations of their patients and their families, the evaluation of the initiative included interviews of patients and their families.

“We hoped to show that blood transfusions can be done safely in patients’ homes by community paramedics, to improve access to this care, and to improve the experience of patients, specifically for patients living with illness or disability, or at end of life.”

FIBROFOCUS: FIBROMYALGIA MULTIDISCIPLINARY TREATMENT PROGRAM

The FibroFOCUS program was created to provide fibromyalgia patients with comprehensive care to meet the challenge of this puzzling medical syndrome – one that affects mostly women and causes whole-body pain, constant fatigue and unrefreshing sleep. FibroFOCUS connects patients with a nurse, physical therapist, kinesiologist, occupational therapist, pharmacist, dietitian, psychologist and physician to help manage their pain and improve functioning. So much more than just medication and injections, this program includes yoga, tai-chi, sleep strategies and nutritional approaches over a three-month period.

Validated instruments were used to measure the impact of the program including the Fibromyalgia Impact Questionnaire (FIQ) and Pain Disability Index (PDI). Results showed patients can improve not only in terms of pain but also sleep, mood and self-efficacy.

“Patients have told us that their initial clinic visit, where much of the multidisciplinary team sees the patient together for over two hours, was the first time they were truly heard and validated.”

NEUROSCIENCE PATIENT EXPERIENCE TEAM

A Neuroscience Peer Support Program was established to understand, enhance, and improve patient and family experience as they journey through Clinical Neuroscience’s acute and rehabilitation units at the Foothills Medical Centre. The staff realized that the first few days, and following weeks, after a life changing injury were a frightening and difficult time for patients and families. While health professionals provide medical care and offer clinical education and support, the need was identified to include the patient perspective for the positive impact and unique viewpoint it provides. Beginning with the Stroke Program, a previous patient was hired as a Patient Experience Liaison to work with team members in building a program to include other previous patients and family members as trained volunteer Peer Supporters. The Peer Supporters provide support, hope, understanding, compassion, and learned wisdom to current patients and their support systems. Due to the overwhelming success, the program has expanded to include Spinal Cord & Brain Injury programs.

Patients are surveyed to gain insight into the effectiveness of the programs.

“Peer supporters offer a unique perspective to patients, offering comfort and reducing isolation while they go through recovery and rehabilitation. Knowing that someone is there to talk to who has been through a similar injury and experience provides great comfort and hope to our patients.”

MEDICINE HAT & AREA STROKE SUPPORT TEAM - STROKE EARLY SUPPORTED DISCHARGE

The Stroke Early Supported Discharge program was established to promote timely access to intensive rehabilitation within the community and to reduce hospital length of stay. The Stroke Support Team is a trans-disciplinary team of health professionals and assistants who work together with the client in developing one plan of care, driven by the client. Every client is engaged from the beginning to determine what they want to be able to achieve before Early Supportive Discharge therapy is completed. Because of the Stroke Support Team, new stroke patients are able to return home sooner from hospital and continue their recovery with the support of an integrated team. Many of these patients have their driver's licenses suspended due to this medical event, so having a therapy team come to their homes reduces some of the stress around transportation decisions and lessens the impact on other family members.



The program has reduced length of stay from 11 to 6.5 days and has reduced the wait for inpatient rehab from 20 to 6.5 days. Clients are seen within two working days of discharge and begin intensive rehab within their home. Early Supportive Discharge patients report incredible satisfaction with the program and their stroke recovery because of it.

“Seeing the progress in our clients is amazing! The transdisciplinary team format allows us to cover every aspect of an individual’s rehabilitation and the intensity helps an individual build skills faster. As a therapist, I saw clients make gains that I never thought were possible.”