



RESEARCH ON THE RUN

Integrated Care

Criteria to evaluate tools for communicating safety concerns in home care transitions

This project will develop a set of criteria and a framework to evaluate tools and resources used by healthcare providers to communicate patient safety risks and issues during patient transitions.

Key learnings

The Canadian Patient Safety Institute's Am I Safe? report provides expert healthcare providers' guidance for communicating safety risks and issues among providers as patients transition from one care setting to another, or from one provider to another.

In this project, we are seeking patients and families' views about *their* expectations of communication about safety risks and issues among healthcare providers. With this information we will elaborate criteria for judging whether tools and resources for communication about safety are adequate and appropriate.

Project overview

An expert roundtable was convened by the Canadian Patient Safety Institute (CPSI) and the Canadian Home Care Association in 2014 to respond to the 2013 report, [Safety at Home: A Pan-Canadian Home Care Safety Study](http://bit.ly/2zj5mRe) (<http://bit.ly/2zj5mRe>). Actions, outcomes and next steps to advance safety in the home were identified. One of the actions in the resulting Home Care Safety Roundtable Action Plan was to identify or develop new tools and resources to assist in reducing harm associated with communication breakdowns at transitions in and out of home care.

Saint Elizabeth researchers undertook to identify approaches that health care providers can take to communicate information effectively to each other about their patients' safety as they move in and out of home care.

The first phase of the project is an environmental scan of current communication tools and resources being used in and across Canada to communicate about patient safety at transitions in and out of home care. Phase 2 is a consolidation of some of the techniques and approaches for communication developed by an expert group of healthcare providers and researchers in a report called [Am I Safe?](http://bit.ly/2gMtrob) (<http://bit.ly/2gMtrob>), commissioned by CPSI and prepared by the Canadian Home Care Association. Phase 3 is an engagement with patients and families in a discussion about the techniques and approaches identified from the Am I Safe? report, and the fourth phase is to analyze the patient and family perspectives and develop criteria and a framework developed to evaluate new and existing tools and resources.

What did we do?

A literature and environmental scan (phase 1) was done to find communication tools and resources currently being used by health care providers during transitions. The literature and environmental scan focused specifically on communication between providers at transitions of care to, within and from home care, and an eclectic list developed, including forms, guides to communication, information technology systems and software, and models.

A working draft of a consolidation of the techniques and approaches in the Am I Safe? report has been completed (partial completion of phase 2), and a focus group with patients and families has been completed. Analysis of the input from the focus group is underway, along with preparation of the final report (phase 4).

Next Steps

Using the patient and families feedback, we will develop criteria and a framework to evaluate tools and resources that can assist in increasing patient safety through appropriate communication between provider organizations involved in patient's transitions in and out of home care.

IMPACT:

The results from this project will help to increase patient safety during transitions into and out of home care.

About our researchers

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How was this research funded?

Saint Elizabeth Health Care provided the funding for this project.

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About the Saint Elizabeth Research Centre

Saint Elizabeth Health Care has made a strategic commitment to research — \$10 million over 10 years.

At the Saint Elizabeth Research Centre, we study the needs of people, their caregivers, and health care providers to develop innovative solutions to improve health and care experiences across the continuum/ more effective approaches to care.

The Research Centre has four areas of focus: integrated care and transitions, end of life care, caregivers and person and family centred care.

Our goal is to improve people's health and care.

We work on innovative solutions for tough problems.

We see possibilities everywhere.