

RESEARCH BRIEF - e-Shift, an innovative home care model: Perceptions of Care Coordinators.

What is the topic of this research?

In response to needs of older adults at the end-of-life and challenges in the recruitment and retention of health care providers (HCPs) in home care in the South West Community Care Access Centre, a new and innovative model of home care, eShift, has been developed. eShift links unregulated providers (technicians) providing home care to a remotely-situated Directing Registered Nurse (DRN), through a smart phone application using real-time communication and documentation technology. The DRN monitors and directs appropriate, safe, and effective care provided in collaboration with the technician in real-time, enhancing quality of care delivery for older adults and their informal caregivers.

How was the study done?

The study involved audio-recorded interviews and focus groups with decision-makers, technology provider, care coordinators, unregulated providers (technicians), RNs (directing and visiting), allied health professionals, nurse practitioners, physicians and informal caregivers. A total of 47 interviews were conducted to gain insight and understand the structure, process, outcomes and overall impact of the eShift model of palliative home care from the end-users in Ontario.

What did the researchers find?

Care coordinators described eShift as a model of care that complimented and augmented their delivery of care. Care coordinators were able to provide timely, quality, efficient and patient-centered care to palliating patients and their informal caregivers along with shift nursing and unregulated providers (technicians) services. This was captured in the following quotes:

“It’s [eShift] a really important piece that we use to help people choose the place where they want to die.”

“It kind of makes me feel good to be able to put somebody’s concerns at ease when there’s so much uncertainty in their life...and then you talk about what’s available and let them know what their options are. Yeah, it’s rewarding.”

Care coordinators also discussed the emotional impact of trying to ensure the care needs are met for palliating patients and their informal caregivers in difficult circumstances with a limited resource capacity. eShift was described as enabling care coordinators to support patients and families through the the palliating process.

“It’s [eShift] definitely alleviated a lot of worry...Knowing that somebody’s there all the time...they’re not going to be calling in after hours or they’re not going to be calling in to the office.”

“...They are probably getting more care than they would get if they went into the hospital. The family is feeling supported”

Overall, care coordinators were positive about the eShift as a model of care that fulfills the needs of palliating patients and their families.

Further Research?

The researchers are conducting a survey of care coordinators to describe the impact of eShift on their practice.

Who are the researchers?

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