

P20 - EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING TO ENGAGE TEAMS IN CULTURE CHANGE: PREVENTION OF EMERGENCY TRANSFERS IN LONG-TERM CARE HOMES

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Brief Description of Research or Project: The Baycrest Centre for Learning, Research and Innovation in Long Term Care piloted a learning module for nursing and personal support staff in long-term care homes to foster An Inter-Provider Approach to Acute Changes in Resident Condition through observation, recognition, assessment, and reporting. The purpose is to enhance the care team's ability to work together to identify early and acute changes in resident condition in order to prevent unnecessary emergency transfers. Triads of nurses and personal support workers who work together come to the session to learn together. The experiential learning approach integrates traditional and humanistic learning principles, team-based learning, interprofessional competencies, simulation and other active learning techniques. The course enables learners to actively acquire and apply foundational knowledge while also enhancing team dynamics related to communication, collaboration and values. The module consists of pre-learning materials, a 1-day learning session, and follow-up consultation by an educator with participating staff and the leadership team. The 1-day learning session enables staff to recognize and communicate changes in resident condition through the use of the Sensory Observation System (SOS) and SBAR techniques. Staff learn how to apply this system to common clinical scenarios and to transfer this learning to their daily practice setting. Preliminary evaluation indicates that learning needs are being met by content (93%) and through the experiential learning approach (92%). Nurses report improved detailed reporting with prioritization by personal support workers (e.g., fewer interruptions during medication passes). Personal support workers feel validated, especially as nurses engage them in closed loop communication. **Why is this research important to profile at the Research Day 2014?** With the spotlight on reducing unnecessary emergency transfers from long-term care homes, personal support workers and nurses need to recognize, prioritize and report acute changes of a resident's health status systematically and with confidence to the circle of care providers. Facilitating discussions for all team members to understand role clarity, expectations and communication strategies for non-urgent and urgent situations allows insight into role interdependence and improved team functioning. Shifting away from traditional, didactic approaches based in individual learning, towards team dynamics and care practices based in team learning, enables teams to organically and proactively create solutions for their unique setting. Innovative learning strategies are needed to foster the competencies of long-term care staff in caring for increasingly complex residents. As the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care moves towards common educational standards for personal support workers, tenured staff

need opportunities to update their knowledge and practice by integrating evolving educational and evidence-based care standards. Culture change efforts in long-term care homes can be supported by enhancing team competencies and by engaging learners in experiential learning to foster a common language, proactive and critical thinking, solution-focused behaviours, and reflective practitioners, as well as enriched information exchange. Lessons learned from the module will be shared with long-term care educators and leaders regarding the benefits of these educational strategies for learners as well as changes in team practice.