IMPROVING CARE TRANSITIONS: FACILITATING CARE TRANSITIONS TO AND FROM LONG TERM CARE FOR OLDER ADULTS WITH MULTIPLE, COMPLEX CONDITIONS

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Brief Description of Research or Project: The Seniors Health Advanced Practice Nurses at Mackenzie Health (MH) initiated this project to explore opportunities to examine and improve transitions of care for seniors in Long Term Care (LTC), and advance synergies in communication between hospital and LTC. The current processes and systems in place were reviewed extensively. Identified themes include: challenges with transfer of accountabilities and communication between health care providers involved in the care of the seniors. In response to identified themes, communication tools and processes were developed to improve seamless transitions of care for seniors along the health care continuum. **Why is this research important to profile at the Research Day 2014?** According to Ontario's Action Plan for Seniors (2013), "The effect of aging on our society will be profound. The collaboration of agencies and stakeholders will be required to create a supportive health care environment …". The importance of this project is that it highlights opportunities and tactics that facilitate seamless transitions for seniors in LTC along the health care continuum. The project is well aligned with the current theme of Building Transformation: Improving Care transitions. Action Plan for Seniors (2013) indicates that the number of seniors living in Ontario will double by 2036. Our project is timely for the identification and creation of innovative processes and strategies to achieve the best health outcomes for the rapidly growing senior population, specifically in LTC. Developed tools include flow charts of processes for transfers between the hospital and LTC, a one page common tool, facilitating communication and transfer of accountability. In addition, several Structured Query Language (SQLs) were developed and implemented, facilitating early identification of seniors admitted to MH. The potential impacts of the project include, improved collaboration and communication among health care providers. It is anticipated that it will increase quality, transparency, and safety of care for seniors; decrease unnecessary transfers to the hospital, and reduce cost to health system. Quality of care and safety for seniors is of high priority to hospitals and LTCs.Our project utilizes standardized tools and processes that can be easily adopted, taught and replicated for implementation across the continuum of care to ensure shared accountability.