A systems approach to integrating heart failure care: A ‘how to’ Roadmap based on lived experience

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Background

The Roadmap describes the implementation process in 3 phases. Critical considerations for successful implementation were identified and organized into 3 main themes or categories (figure 1). Recommendations for implementing a systems approach for integrative heart failure care are outlined in Table 1.

Methods

National CCH guidelines recommend a systems-level approach to organizing care for patients with heart failure (HF). The spoke-hub-noodle (SHN) model represents an organization of care that works collaboratively with the primary care sector and is highly integrated with community-based multidisciplinary teams of health care providers from primary and specialty care. In Ontario, two sets of standards were released—the SHN model for integrated HF care (care organizations) and the Quality Standard for HF Care in the Community (delivery of care).

The SHN model offers a framework that guides the process of creating a structured and integrated system for optimizing care for patients with HF. CorHealth Ontario, a partnership of doctors, nurses, and other health care professionals, is implementing the SHN model in Ontario.

The SHN model focuses on connecting and integrating HF care with patients and caregivers throughout the planning phase, and involves three early adopter teams (London, Ottawa, and Guelph regions). Between June 2018–March 2019 each early adopter team had the opportunity to test the SHN model with CorHealth and early adopter teams.

Results

Table 1: Recommendations for implementing a system approach to integrating heart failure care as mapped to the 3 phases are outlined in Table 1.

Conclusion

Future Direction

Although a systems approach to organizing care for patients with HF is recommended, the actual ‘how to’ remains poorly understood. The Roadmap is intended to guide stakeholders by identifying key critical requirements from the ‘lived experience’ of primary and specialty care clinicians and administrators. It will be used to help them work together to generate locally meaningful and innovative system-level solutions to address current gaps in HF care.

For more information on integrating heart failure care (IHFC) and the IHFC Implementation Support Toolkits, please visit the CorHealth Ontario website at www.corhealthontario.ca.

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