

Connect-Home

Practice Change Leaders in Health and Aging Project
Mark Toles, PhD, RN and Lutheran Services Carolinas

Background

In 2015-2016 we developed and pilot-tested “Connect-Home,” transitional care services to prepare skilled nursing facility (SNF) patient and caregiver dyads for transitions in care from SNFs to home. Findings in the pilot test demonstrated that Connect-Home was feasible and acceptable to staff in 3 pilot SNFs; findings also indicated that intervention dyads, compared to controls, reported a significant increase in preparedness for discharge, as measured with the Care Transitions Measure-3.

Goals

The goals of this Practice Change Leaders project are to sustain transitional care services in the three pilot SNFs, and make a business case for sustaining them in the future.

Activities

1. In three SNFs, deliver transitional care of SNF patient and caregiver dyads
 - a. Individualize transition plans of care
 - b. Engage and educate patients and caregivers
 - c. Inform and activate community providers
 - d. Reinforce transition plans with follow-up phone calls after discharge
2. Use quality improvement methods to sustain Connect-Home by transforming the research-oriented pilot-test to enduring patient and caregiver services
 - a. Implement procedures for site champions to oversee Connect-Home in the SNFs
 - b. Integrate Connect-Home training procedures with staff training procedures in the SNFs
 - c. Implement procedures for staff in Lutheran Services Carolinas to audit project outcomes and prepare reports for site champions to monitor and improve performance with staff
3. Disseminate findings to executive leaders, regional healthcare providers, and selected national organizations.

Value

The project will create a model for sustaining transitional care in SNFs that will be transferrable to other SNFs and organizations. It will also develop a business case for providing transitional care of SNF patients and their family caregivers.