Improving Healthcare Outcomes through an Interdisciplinary Effort of Social Work and Pharmacy in a “Village” Model Setting

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Improving Healthcare Outcomes through an Interdisciplinary Effort of Social Work and Pharmacy in a “Village” Model Setting

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PURPOSE
To present an innovative community intervention comprised of pharmacists and social workers designed to decrease hospital readmissions among older adults. We describe an implementation plan that “Villages” can use to lower hospital admissions among older persons residing in these communities.

INTRODUCTION
The “Village” model was developed based on findings from a survey conducted by The National Institute in Aging that 90% of older adults desire to age in their homes. This is an innovative consumer-driven approach that can enhance the well-being of community-dwelling seniors through a combination of social activities, volunteer opportunities, service referral, and direct assistance. The “Village” model is a promising approach that supports aging in place. Newton at Home and Ashbury Village have partnered with their local hospital to assist members during their return home and help reduce readmission rates. A recent study in the Journal of American Geriatrics Services conducted in their homes. Topics of interest during the interview included reason for hospitalization, length of stay, personal role in the discharge process, and main concerns while in the hospital. We also asked members who took care of their home during their hospitalization, what services were in place when they returned home, and what services were not in place at the time, but would have been beneficial to their recovery. Finally, each member who volunteered to be interviewed was asked to self-rate their health before and after their hospital stay based on the following scale: 1) Very good, 2) Good, 3) Fair, 4) Bad, 5) Very bad.

RESULTS
The findings from our one-on-one interviews reinforced the current trend of older adults lacking services and coordination of care as they transition from hospital to home. The top areas of concern include:
- In-home physical and occupational therapy
- Questions about insurance information
- Transportation

CONCLUSIONS
The Village Model represents an innovative approach to allowing seniors to stay in their homes despite increasing age and physical limitations. However, a transition from hospital stay back home has proven to be more challenging for older adults, especially those living independently in the community. This has lead to increasing hospital readmission rates, worsening outcomes for older adults and further financial burden for the entire healthcare system. With the main goal of Village Connections being to keep seniors in their homes, it is imperative that members be provided with step-by-step guidance throughout the transition of care process. By utilizing an interdisciplinary approach between social work and pharmacy, we have created a multi-faceted transition of care tool kit that can be easily understood and utilized by volunteers. We have incorporated each aspect of the transition of care process where Village Connections and members expressed concern with the hope that the process will become more successful and keep older adults living in their homes for as long as possible.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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