

Abstract Title: Self-health Care Decision Making for Congestive Heart Failure Patients: Successful Change in Evidence –Based Practice through Use of Theory of Reasoned Action

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Background

The Community Living Center is a 26-bed post-acute unit of a VA Hospital with an average LOS of <30 days. Congestive Heart Failure (CHF) is associated with high mortality and poor quality of life, affecting five million Americans. Hospital admissions have increased six-fold since 1970 and is the number one reason for readmissions within the VA healthcare system.

The Theory of Reasoned Action/ Planned Behavior recognizes an individual’s behavior is determined by intention to engage and is influenced by: Attitude, Subjective Beliefs, and Perceived Behavior Control. This theory provides a model to empower individuals to control their health-seeking behaviors.

Purpose

The goal is to change Veteran’s health care behavior intentions, leading to increased effort and compliance with CHF goals. Specific aims were to empower patients and caregivers in effective self-management and reduce readmissions.

Methods

Using Learning Circles, Veterans were able to increase control over their health and identify strategies for changing health behavior. The multidisciplinary CHF team provided education of disease process, medication management, and nutrition. The focus was helping each Veteran develop new habits with CHF monitoring.

During each education session, participants complete a questionnaire highlighting individual understanding and areas needing more instruction. Each Veteran receives a BP Cuff, scale and notebook. Nurses assisted with recording weights and BP readings, developing habits of daily monitoring.

Outcome

The major outcome measured was readmissions for CHF within 30 days of discharge from the CLC.

Ninety-two Veterans attended the CHF Learning Circles January, 2015 to March, 2016. Only one Veteran was readmitted for CHF within 30 days.

Conclusion

Veterans with CHF can improve chronic health conditions by understanding their behavior intentions and their ability to affect positive change through health seeking behaviors.

