

An Interdisciplinary Geriatric Outreach and Training Program

The University of Connecticut School of Nursing and Middlesex Hospital

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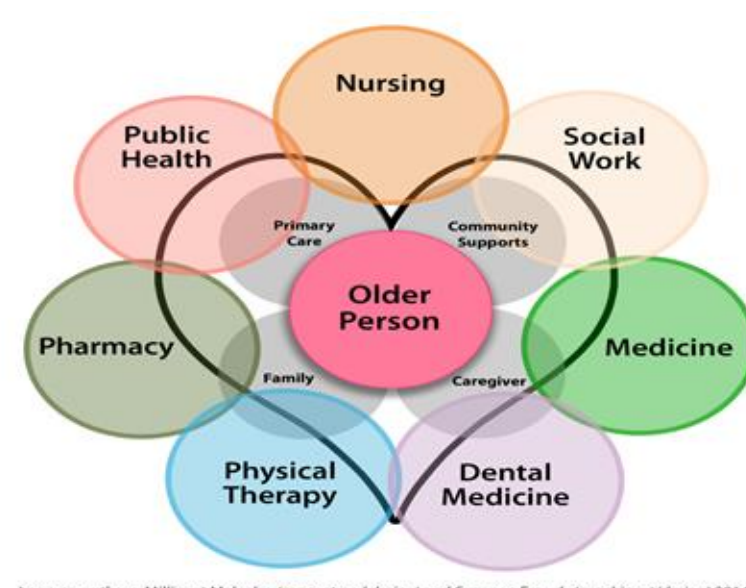
Abstract

The need for older adults to access high quality care can only be fully addressed with a workforce well trained in the specialty of geriatrics. Geriatric Outreach and Training with Care (Got Care!) is an innovative geriatric education and practice model designed to develop a cadre of healthcare providers skilled in interprofessional, geriatric care. A team of clinical faculty with geriatric expertise from nursing, medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, physical therapy, social work, and public health developed an interprofessional training program for students and residents in geriatric assessment and management. The outreach portion of GOT Care! consisted of home visits and targeted assessments for older persons with multiple chronic conditions and repeated emergency department visits. The purpose of this study was to evaluate students' and patients' perceptions of participating in the Geriatric Outreach and Training with Care (GOT Care!) program. Participant observations and open-ended questionnaires were utilized to gather data regarding students' (n=60) and patients' (n= 12) perceptions of participating in GOT Care! Data were analyzed using immersion/crystallization techniques as described by Borkan. Student and patient participants expressed high satisfaction with the training and outreach programs. Fifteen home visits were made during the first semester of outreach, nine participants were screened for benefits and were eligible for twenty different programs.

Background

- Middlesex County has a rapidly growing older adult population with reported health care deficits such as excessive emergency department (ED) use, potentially related to the access and quality of primary care for this population (University of New England, 2008).
- The Institute of Medicine (IOM) Report, Retooling for an Aging America: Building the Healthcare Workforce (2008), established need for provider workforce to meet needs of rapidly aging 65+ populations.
- Currently 7,128 geriatric physicians with need for 36,000 by 2030. Only 4% APRN's, 1% RN's have specialty certifications in the care of older adults (IOM, 2008).
- With the anticipated shortage of geriatric specialized practitioners, this program provides students an opportunity to gain critical knowledge for the care of vulnerable older persons with multiple chronic conditions.

GOT Care! Conceptual Framework



The Geriatric Outreach and Training with Care (GOT Care!) Interprofessional Practice Model Graphic Illustration (Malcolm, M. & French, S., 2014) depicts the overall coherence, synchronization, and shared efforts of the GOT Care! Interprofessional Practice Model. Through this model, a well-trained interprofessional healthcare team connects to an older person and their foundational support system with the caring "heart". This model illustrates a harmonious collaboration, with the intent to prepare and enhance the interprofessional geriatric health care workforce, while simultaneously improving healthcare outcomes for the older person.

GOT Care! Program Development

Phase 1: Planning

- Development of the curriculum, program evaluation and program preparation by selected geriatric ICPC faculty team.
- Focus of training to include evidence based, culturally competent geriatric care, with specialty targeted population of older persons who served in the military.
- Work with community partner Middlesex Hospital to refine the existing IT plan to identify vulnerable older persons with MCC and high inappropriate ED use.

Phase 2: Implementation

- Students from all disciplines participate in a 2 day GOT Care! IPC and geriatric training program before community outreach.
- Carry out comprehensive geriatric in home assessment of vulnerable elder by ICPT team, including ICPT student cohort and faculty.
- Communicate with identified vulnerable older persons and their primary care provider on results and recommendations from the in-home CGA initial assessment and follow up .

Phase 3: Evaluation

- Evaluate Got Care patients' perceptions of satisfaction with the in-Home CGA process and experiences with follow-up with recommendations from participants.

Program Evaluation Objectives

Our program evaluation plan encompasses formative and summative assessments and is a continuous process. For this study our goals were:

- To determine students and patients perceptions of participating in the GOT Care! Outreach and Training Program.
- To monitor patient outcomes during the first semester of implementation to identify program strengths and areas needing improvement.

Methods

- Participant observations and open-ended questionnaires were utilized to gather data regarding students' (n=60) and patients' (n= 12) perceptions of participating in GOT Care!
- Data collected by trained graduate nursing student.
- Data were analyzed using immersion/crystallization techniques as described by Borkan.

GOT Care! Team

Nursing: RN 19 (14 students and 5 faculty)
Nursing: AGNP (11 students and 2 faculty)
Nursing: DNP (1 GNP, 1 FNP, 1 AGNP-Acute Care)
Medicine: Geriatrics (2 faculty); Family Medicine (1 resident)
Pharmacy: (11 PharmD students and 1 PharmD faculty)
Physical Therapy: (1 DPT faculty and 7 DPT students)
Social Work: (4 faculty and 1 student)
Dental Medicine: (1 faculty and 12Students)
Public Health: (2 faculty)



Themes Drawn from Contextual Data

Students' Perceptions

Interactive Learning
Collaboration and Problem Solving with other Professions
Learning Unique Challenges of Geriatric Care
Enthusiasm for Geriatric Assessment and Outreach

"By working together we were able to identify and address more problems than if we had each worked independently. Each member of the team was allowed to be involved in the patient case."
-Student Participant

Patients' Perceptions

Highly Satisfied with Care
Students Learn from Older Adults
They Take the Time to See How I am Doing

"I'm very satisfied with the GOT Care program and it's wonderful students can learn from us."
- GOT Care Participant

Program Outcomes

Geriatric Assessments Revealed:

ED visits in previous 6 months $M=4.0$, (Range 2-6)
10 of 12 patients with hx of or current mental health disorder or substance abuse problem.
12 of 12 high risk for falls (4+ high risk) $M=10.83$, (Range 5-14)
Medication concerns per patient $M = 4.91$ (range 2-9)

GOT! Care Team Recommendations to PCPs:

Social work referrals
Palliative care consults
Medication reconciliation
Recommendations for increasing safety in the home.
Dental referrals

Future Directions

Clinical Outcomes to be Examined:

Patient communication about care and satisfaction with care.
Disease management and patient safety (falls, medications)
ED use and re-hospitalizations tracked at 3 months and 6 months post GOT! CARE outreach visits.

Secure Future Funding:

GOT Care! Team follow-up interventions in the home.

Acknowledgements

"This project is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under grant number HRSA-14-070 Nurse Education, Practice, Quality and Retention-Interprofessional Collaborative Practice for \$1,400,688 with no other nongovernmental funding. This information or content and conclusions are those of the author and should not be construed as the official position or policy of, nor should any endorsements be inferred by HRSA, HHS or the U.S. Government."

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