

Program reduces emergency transfers for long-term care residents

Currently offered only in
Capital District Health Authority

By DR. IONA WILE
Hants Community Hospital

A program that sees family physicians give regular and consistent care to residents in long-term care facilities has resulted in 50 per cent fewer emergency department transfers in the three years since its implementation.

Care by Design was created under the leadership of family physician Barry Clarke, and imple-

mented in the Capital District Health Authority in 2010. Its primary goal is to reduce transfers of patients to emergency departments. This is done by increasing physician involvement in the management of the patient's health care needs.

"Weekly rounds by family physicians provide a pro-active management style which residents themselves and their family members truly appreciate. Staff at the facility and physicians form a team approach in meeting

health-care needs of the residents and in so doing raises the bar in quality of health care for these frail individuals," said Dr. Clarke.

The program is currently offered only in the Capital district. Although physicians elsewhere in the province are interested in the program it's not yet funded in any other district.

How the program works

Care by Design sees the family physician attend the facility once a week to conduct rounds. Most

physicians cover 12-36 residents living in one unit. A nurse familiar with the residents discusses with the physician any health concerns. Preamble requirements are that physicians may only claim a visit when there has been a medically necessary specific request by nursing home staff, the patient or their family. Physicians can't claim for a routine "rounds" visit.

Outside of weekly rounds, the physician is available by telephone from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m., Monday to Friday, to address issues requiring urgent attention.

The 55 physicians who are participating in Care by Design are part of an on-call roster and rotate, on a weekly basis, providing coverage after hours and on holidays. There's compensation for on-call coverage and fee-for-service payment for eligible service encounters.

Long-term care clinical geriatric assessment

The physician completes the physician component of the long-term care clinical geriatric assessment (CGA) every six to 12 months. This service is billed to MSI and specific billing rules apply. The CGA is a multi-disciplinary assessment process that provides a comprehensive summary of the resident's medical history, medications, level of function, frailty score, advanced directives, EPOA and GFR. The CGA can be used by all health-care providers to quickly access health information that's up to date for the resident.

Medication review

A medication review (MR) is done by the physician, in collaboration with the nurse and pharmacist as required, every six months. This service is also billed by the physician to MSI and specific billing rules apply.

The purpose of an MR is to reduce the number of medications used as this can create many problems with the senior population.

Advanced care paramedic

The advanced care paramedic (ACP) is part of the health-care team, working with Care by Design in the Halifax Regional Municipality. These paramedics have an additional level of training for the health-care needs of people living in long-term care facilities and can evaluate residents who are more ill and may require transfer to hospital for further management.

ACPs work collaboratively with the patient, nurse, emergency department physician, and family physician to best manage the health crisis. Transfers to the emergency department can be avoided when the care is well managed in the long-term care facility.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT CARE BY DESIGN, CONTACT:

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Dr. Barry Clarke
family physician



Upcoming Events

April 26	Translating Knowledge into Practice: Update on Psychotic Disorders	<i>Family Physicians and Specialists</i>	Sandra Mader 902.464.3122 sandra.mader@cdha.nshealth.ca
April 26 – 27	Trends in the Practice of Obstetrics & Gynecology	<i>Family Physicians and Specialist</i>	Michelle Pineau 902.470.6905 michelle.pineau@iwk.nshealth.ca
May 11	Shared Care in Urology	<i>Family Physicians</i>	Kim Lake 902.494.1588 kim.lake@dal.ca
May 30 – 31	Leading the Way: 11 th Multidisciplinary Paediatric Orthopaedic Conference	<i>Family Physicians and Specialists</i>	Kyleigh Woods 902.470.8025 kyleigh.woods@iwk.nshealth.ca
Nov 1	3 rd Annual Care by Design Long Term Care Conference	<i>Family Physicians</i>	Kim Lake 902.494.1588 kim.lake@dal.ca
Nov 28 – 30	87th Annual Dalhousie Refresher Course	<i>Family and Emergency Physicians</i>	Mary Ann Robinson, 902.494.1459 mary.ann.robinson@dal.ca

Events are in Halifax unless otherwise indicated. Registration normally opens 6 – 7 weeks before the program. For updates on these and other Dalhousie CME activities, visit cme.medicine.dal.ca

Nova Scotia Community Hospital Programs

Supported by Doctors Nova Scotia

The following presentations are confirmed as of February 8. Additional programs will be offered. Most programs are recommended for 1-2 credit hours for MAINPRO-M1 and / or Maintenance of Certification Section 1. Dates may change, so please watch for notices, sent via fax several weeks before each program, or visit cme.medicine.dal.ca/chp.htm. For information, contact 902.494.1484, nadine.macdonald@dal.ca.

Amherst	Update on Arrhythmia Treatment	28-Mar-13
	Communication Skills	07-May-13
	MSRA	23-May-13
Antigonish	STEMI, NSTEMI and Diastolic Ventricular Dysfunction	25-Apr-13
	Alcohol Withdrawal	23-May-13
Bridgewater	Parkinsonian Symptoms...Older Adults	02-May-13
	Unexplained Somatic Symptoms	16-May-13
	Fibromyalgia	20-Jun-13
Dartmouth	Capacity/Competency after Decline	27-Mar-13
	Hyperthyroidism	24-Apr-13
Halifax	MS Update	11-Apr-13
	Paediatric Dermatology Pearls	15-May-13
Inverness	Procedural Sedation	10-May-13
New Glasgow	The Child with a Murmur	01-May-13
	Communication Skills	08-May-13
North Sydney	Immunizations	16-Apr-13
	Pulmonary Hypertension	09-May-13
Sydney	Failure to Thrive in the Elderly	13-Mar-13
Truro	Leukemia, Lymphoma...	25-Apr-13

Women's Wellness Program

Watch for this half-day program coming to selected communities across the province. Potential topics include contraception, dysfunctional uterine bleeding, perimenopause and menopause management, smoking cessation, cancer screening, obesity, heart disease, mental health issues, poverty and domestic violence. Actual content will vary by community based on needs assessment. If funding permits, the program will be offered in up to seven locations. Partial support for the series, which commences in March, has been provided by Merck Canada.

Webinars

Supported by Doctors Nova Scotia

These programs, scheduled on Wednesday and Thursday evenings at 8:00 pm, are available to all Nova Scotia physicians. We are pleased to offer these opportunities to learn at home, and look forward to your participation and feedback.

Webinars are announced via email to all Nova Scotia family physicians in the two weeks preceding the event. If you have not recently been receiving our email communications, please contact kim.lake@dal.ca to update your email address. Because firewalls, spam filters and temporarily full mailboxes can interfere with your receipt of these announcements, we urge you to also check our website cme.medicine.dal.ca/Webinars.htm. Details of upcoming webinars are posted as soon as they are confirmed, usually several months before the event. For information, contact 902.494.1484, nadine.macdonald@dal.ca. Webinars confirmed as of September 8 include:

Aging and Cognition/Memory	27-Mar-13
Low Back Pain	10-Apr-13
Neuropathic Pain	25-Apr-13
Physicians and the Pharmaceutical Industry	08-May-13
Anemia	23-May-13