

POSTER ABSTRACT

Inter-professional collaboration and communication during acute hospitalization of older patients with dementia

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Background: Good collaboration and communication between professionals working in home environment, e.g. the dementia case manager and general practitioner GP and those working in the hospital, e.g. ward nurses, physicians and transitional care nurses, is essential during care transitions between home and hospital for patients with dementia to ensure patient safety and continuum of care. This study aimed to explore the current experienced collaboration between healthcare professionals involved in care transitions of unplanned hospitalized elderly people with dementia.

Methods: This prospective observational study took place among healthcare professionals in the region of The Hague in the Netherlands, during 2016. Main outcomes included descriptive quantitative analysis of experienced collaboration with other healthcare professionals using the validated 'Relational Coordination Survey for Patient Care', looking at inter-professional communication and collaboration. Qualitative information was obtained with a purposive designed open question to inquire about any problems they had experienced in the collaboration with other healthcare providers.

Results: A mix of dementia case managers n=21, GPs n=23, ward nurses n=70, physicians n=14 and transitional care nurses n=14 filled out the questionnaire. Relational Coordination between healthcare providers within the hospital was experienced as good. However, collaboration between professionals working within the home situation of the patient and those working at the hospital collaboration was experienced as poor to fair.

Conclusion: Results of this study show that effective collaboration needs enhanced inter-professional communication during transition of care to deliver the necessary complex and continuum of care.

Lessons learned: From the qualitative data we learned that further steps should focus on the development of technical interventions to facilitate communication and a more effective role for the dementia case manager.

Heeren; Inter-professional collaboration and communication during acute hospitalization of older patients with dementia

Keywords: inter-professional; communication; collaboration; hospitalization; dementia
