

Who is being nominated?

Mary Tedford

Organisation

South Lanarkshire Council, Health and Social Care Partnership

Award Details

Category

Category 6: Making Research & Evidence Real 2019

Q1: Overview

The aim of the project was to reduce harm associated with incontinence in addition reduce the numbers and absorbency levels of incontinence pads used.

Incontinence is common in care home residents with prevalence ranging from 30% - 80% and is associated with risks such as falls, infection and skin damage. In care homes incontinence is primarily managed with absorbency pads which contain rather than promote and improve continence. National continence guidance suggests interventions such as toilet assistance; optimal fluids and nutrition and medication review can promote continence rehabilitation and reduce the use of absorbency products in the elderly by up to 50%.

The expected outcome of the project was to reduce the use of high absorbency products by 25% in 12 months with an additional outcome to reduce the safety risks associated with incontinence as a result of Continence Promotion Care Bundle (CPCB) implementation.

The project which ran from September 2016 to June 2017 was supported and funded by the Health Foundation.

Our project outlines an innovative partnership approach to promoting continence within two care homes in NHS Lanarkshire. This is currently being rolled out across south Lanarkshire.

Q2: What did you do?

The care homes developed a continence promotion care bundle (CPCB) which they tested and refined. They positively engaged with all education and support provided, implementing the care bundle auditing compliance, capturing and analysing the results. Though the improvement methodology used was a new concept for the care homes the staff embraced the challenge and drove the improvement in care provision.

Learning gained from the project would be transferable to other care homes and potentially to NHS areas where elderly people are cared for. A toolkit has been developed which includes the continence promotion care bundle. It is important to note that the success of this project which had a positive impact on the care of elderly people in the care homes was not attributed merely to the implementation of a care bundle. The success was the result of a combination of factors including- education on incontinence, improvement methodology, using data for improvement and the care homes taking ownership of the developments.

The project has gained national (Scotland) recognition

- Received Scottish GO Award 2017/18 for excellence in Public Procurement; innovation and initiative,

Central Government Health and Social Care category.

- captured the interest of a local MSP who discussed it at a parliamentary debate on incontinence
- captured interest of clinical director who advises Scottish Government and plans to visit the project team February 2018

The project has also been accepted as a poster presentation at the forthcoming International Forum on Quality and Safety in Healthcare 2018, Amsterdam.

Plans are currently being developed to support the spreading of this positive change in practice to the remaining 71 care homes across north and south Lanarkshire.

The project has demonstrated that the use of quality improvement methods and the implementation of CPCB can improve continence care and has the potential for a wider effect on re-enablement and promoting patient safety.

The benefits of any project, may be realised throughout the duration, however improvement may be short lived if it is not sustained. A significant success factor is that the improvements were generated by care home staff and their ownership in the successful implementation of the CPCB as opposed to an external 'expert' performing improvement.

The improvement developed would be transferable to other care homes, however further testing and refining the measures to establish and capture more robust outcome data would be beneficial.

Taking forward learning from this project, further refinements would include; developing measures to assess the effect on medication reduction, unscheduled admissions and releasing time to care. In addition, further testing of this model of care will provide evidence for wider implementation.

A reporting structure has been a feature of this project where the care homes submitted data from bundle testing that was analysed and shared with the homes, with support and advice on areas to focus for improvement.

Q3: What did you achieve?

Data captured demonstrated the following successes:

- reduction in episodes of incontinence
- reduction in pad use
- reduced residents distress
- improved record keeping
- more time with residents
- 40% - 65% reduction in falls
- 50% reduction in Urinary tract infection (UTI)
- 30% reduction in skin damage
- 40% reduction in unplanned hospital admission for falls / UTI

Key findings

The care bundle implementation has led to a noteworthy drop in the rate of incontinence and also to three adverse events linked to incontinence. This inevitably leads to a reduction in the resources and costs associated with managing these events. In addition, owing to the reduction in use of incontinence containment products (high absorbency pads), consumable costs will also have been reduced.

A reduction in incontinence and incontinence-related events such as falls and UTIs is also likely to have an impact on the health related quality of life of the care home residents. Based on the exploratory analysis, implementation of the improvement project may generate an additional 4 quality-adjusted-life-years (QALYs).

In summary, in economic terms, the improvement project is said to dominate usual care because it has led to a reduction in costs and also an improvement in service user outcomes and quality of life.

The following are testimonies from people involved in this project.

The manager asked me if I wanted my wife to take part and gave me some information. I have been delighted in what has been done. My wife is not wet or in distress when I visit. It is good to know the staff are striving to improve her care”

Husband of resident

The impact and experience of the project on care home staff, residents and relatives was captured on video as part of the overall project evaluation which can be accessed via <https://youtu.be/REOx5PNGTX4>

“I have been surprised by how this has freed up our time. We have much more time to spend with residents rather than focussing on personal care and frequent changes in clothing.”

Care Assistant.

“This has been a great opportunity for us to work as a team to improve care. The project has energised our team and focussed on the major contribution the carers provide”

Unit Manager

“My mum experienced frequent urinary infections and was always falling. All of this caused great distress to the family. We have seen a huge improvement since this programme was introduced. My mum has not had a urinary infection or a fall since the programme started. She is asking to go to the toilet and is less distressed.

Daughter of resident.

Q4: Why should you receive an award?

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Learning gained from the project is transferable to other care homes.

The success was the result of a combination of factors including- education on incontinence, improvement methodology, using data for improvement and the care homes taking ownership of the developments.