

BRIGHT LIGHTS AWARDS



2015

Clinical innovations keeping people at home and out of the hospital Prince Edward Family Health Team

Hospital@Home Program: Bringing the Hospital to the Patient



Given the choice, who wouldn't prefer healing in the comfort of his or her own home, rather than in a hospital bed? As Canada's population ages, there is more stress on the healthcare system than ever before, and communities are developing innovative ways to meet the increased needs.

The Prince Edward Family Health Team's Hospital@Home program is dedicated to keeping people out of hospital and in familiar environs, where they are more likely to thrive. This innovative initiative offers appropriate acute care patients the option of at-home treatment, diverting them to an initiative that wraps the necessary care around them in their own surroundings.

The Hospital@Home program aims to provide better health, better care and better value for patients, but the family health team quickly realized that it wasn't something any organization could succeed at individually. With Hospital@Home, the PEFHT has organized a collaborative, multi-disciplinary program. The team leads a partnership with the local Community Care Access Centre, Quinte Healthcare Corp. and St. Elizabeth Healthcare. Working together, the partners aim to improve the patient experience and yield better health outcomes in a cost-effective manner. They bring the resources to the patient, rather than forcing the patient to seek out these resources.

Their success to date has been impressive. The evaluation of Hospital@Home's two-year pilot program, conducted by Queen's University researchers, showed extremely high levels of patient, caregiver and provider satisfaction, with 89 per cent of the patients completely satisfied with the quality of care they received at home. Their care cost 42.6 per cent less than conventional hospitalization and there were marked decreases in emergency room visits, hospital admissions and re-admissions among the program participants.

Hospital@Home's implementation team is committed to continued success. Members meet regularly to review their processes, streamline procedures and solve issues that arise. Since its inception, staff have also worked collaboratively with other teams and programs within the FHT, such as the heart function clinic, to provide quality patient care at home.

Hospital@Home regularly provides updates and education to partners and to the public. The team has held two public forums to promote awareness of the program and increase understanding, and its nurse practitioner is spreading the word about the program through presentations at a number of healthcare conference.

Hospital@Home has gone above and beyond in developing partnerships with other organizations and linking patients with other supports in the community. It succeeds in showing how an interdisciplinary team can work with multiple partners to ensure the best possible care for patients by bringing the necessary treatments to them in the comfort of their own homes.