



Expanding Your Reach McMaster Family Health Team

Healthy Aging Series



Although primary care teams are acknowledged as a channel for reducing disparities in care provincewide, only 25 to 30 per cent of Ontarians have access to their care. By offering its Healthy Aging Series to all seniors in the City of Hamilton, McMaster Family Health Team is extending the reach of its services beyond its own roster, allowing others the benefit of its expertise.

The Healthy Aging Series was born from the results of Health TAPESTRY, a randomized controlled trial that allowed participants to identify personal health goals for which they would like to see more robust programming. When four distinct themes emerged among the older adult population, FHT staff used

them as an ideal opportunity to deliver education on each of these topics efficiently and effectively to audiences of 20 to 30 patients at once. Older patients' concerns revealed 35% were at high risk for malnutrition, 90% were not meeting daily activity targets for their age, 60% wanted to learn more about Advance Care Planning and over half were having challenges with bowel or bladder health. These became the subjects of the four-session series.

Participants rated the series, with scores ranging from 82.8 per cent to 100 per cent. They found the presentations well-organized with engaging presenters and new and relevant information. The team continues to offer the series four times a year and has opened it to the city's entire senior population. Team members are happy to be providing information they might not have addressed and believe their patients feel more connected to the team as a result. The workshops are ever-changing, based on new evidence and on feedback from the participants.

In fact, the series provides a new, cost-effective approach of identifying and responding to the goals of "well" patients who are not yet at-risk or in a health crisis that can be used by any interprofessional team. Six FHTs across the province will have access to Health TAPESTRY in 2019, and the series is an ideal model for using its results.



Key Facts:

- 30 participants per session; registration always full
- Series offered four times each year
- Patients scored 82.9% to 100% for presenter engagement and presentation of new and relevant information
- Flexible format will allow for new themes in the future
- Cost-effective way of identifying health goals of patients who are not yet at risk
- Open to all older adults in Hamilton
- Participant survey used to improve future sessions