A Knowledge Translation Project on Benchmark End-of-life Care Practices for the Elderly in Primary Care

This 3-year project will increase the uptake of benchmark end-of-life (EOL) care for elderly patients with advanced illness. It involves the development of quality indicators associated with primary care best practices in EOL care and promoting their integration into the EMR of practicing primary care physicians in British Columbia.

The investigators want to find out if integrating the palliative approach into the electronic medical record (EMR) of primary care physicians can enhance EOL care in ways that are measurable, scalable and sustainable. Increasing the knowledge about identification, assessment and pro-active care planning and the technology supports for those processes in practice will mitigate unnecessary suffering and promote quality care for elderly patients with advanced disease, and promote more efficient use of health care resources.

The project is being done at primary care practice sites at Fraser Health and several Divisions of Family Practice in BC. Primary care physicians will also be directly involved as they are well positioned to provide palliative and end of-life care to patients.

Principal Investigators:

Doris Barwich, MD

Host Institutions:

Fraser Health Authority, BC

Dr. Doris Barwich is the Program Medical Director for End-of-Life Care in Fraser Health. In this role she has provided Medical Leadership for the development of the regional Hospice Palliative Care program as well as the award winning Advance Care Planning portfolio. Doris has also been involved in several provincial and national initiatives to promote better palliative or end of life care and is an executive member of Canadian Researchers at End-of-Life Network (CARENET). Research interests include the integration of palliative and primary care, bowel care in the palliative population, and Advance Care Planning.

Francis Lau, PhD, MBA, MSc

University of Victoria, Victoria

Dr. Francis Lau is a Professor in the School of Health Information Science at the University of Victoria. He has a PhD in medical sciences with a specialization in medical informatics. He has a diverse background in business, computing and medical sciences, with 14 years of professional experience in the health IT industry. Dr. Lau’s research foci are in health information system evaluation, clinical vocabularies, and palliative care informatics. He is currently the recipient of the eHealth Chair funded by CIHR/Infoway to establish an eHealth Observatory to examine the impact of health information system deployment in Canada.

Co-Investigators:

Neil Hilliard, MD, Fraser Health Authority, Chilliwack
Bruce Hobson, MD, Private Practice, Powell River
Morgan Price, MD, PhD, CCFP, University of British Columbia

Collaborators:

Mary Lesperance, PhD, PStat, University of Victoria
Douglas McGregor, MD, Victoria Hospice

Project Contact: Jes Bassi, jbassi@uvic.ca

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