

Managing Continuity of Care for Continuing Care Services in Two Health Regions: Perspectives on Waitlists

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Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this project is to examine the **nature of waitlists** for publicly funded continuing care (CC) services in Capital Health and Calgary Health Region and the **experience of individuals as they wait** for these services.

Phase 1: Quantitative Analyses

- Systems level analysis of the waitlists in both health regions retrospectively for 5 years and prospectively for 2 years to answer the following research questions:
1. What are the characteristics of persons on the waitlist for all publicly funded CC services in both health regions?
 2. What is the pattern of movement of waitlisted individuals through the system within each health region?
 3. How does utilization of services change as individuals move through the system and what costs to the health system are related to CC service use?
 4. How many placement refusals do the waitlist agencies receive from CC services and what are the reasons given by the service provider for refusing to admit/provide services to the person?

Phase 2: Qualitative Analyses

- Analysis of the perspectives, circumstances, and choices of waitlisted individuals and their families.
 - Participants will be recruited based on the data collected in Phase 1 to provide answers to the following questions:
1. Previous to becoming waitlisted, have individuals relocated from a community home to obtain services because of declining health or disabilities? What if any service, would have allowed the individual to remain at the previous location or level of service?
 2. How do individuals and their families describe the circumstances under which the individuals were placed on the CC services waitlist?
 3. What factors contribute to an individual's selection of CC services?
 4. How do individuals and families prepare for relocation to centers within the CC system? When a CC bed becomes available why do some individuals and families decline?
 5. What factors ameliorate or exacerbate the circumstances that lead to acceptance of services? Which factors come into play during the 48 hours individuals have to decide to accept services when they become available?

Methods: Phase 1

- In conjunction with Capital Health and Calgary Health regions, data are being extracted from the long-term care waitlist databases
- Data extraction has begun
- Data are being transferred from the Long Term Care Client Information System into SPSS for analyses
- Several thousand cases from both regions will be considered in the analyses

Methods: Phase 2

- Purposive sampling will be used to select 25 individuals and their families from each health region
- Two interviews will be conducted with each individual using a semi-structured interview guide: the first interview will be conducted while the person is on the waitlist and the second after the person has been placed or started receiving services
- Data will be analyzed using the systematic analytic methods of grounded theory
- Methods and analyses based on pilot data provided by Strang and Koop (2003; 2004)

Progress to Date

- Ethics and administrative approval in both health regions has been obtained
- An extensive project plan has been developed, which provides a detailed outline of project milestones and timelines
- Data collection for Phase 1 is underway
- Data collection for Phase 2 is commencing
- Regular meetings between decision making partners and researchers are occurring
- Electronic newsletter is sent out to the entire team once per month

Research Team Members

Dr. Doris Milke, *The CAPITAL CARE Group*; Susan Shaw, Alberta Health and Wellness; **Cathy West**, Calgary Health Region; **Jesse Jahrig**, *The CAPITAL CARE Group*; **Shelley Enderton**, University of Calgary; **Margaret King**, Alberta Health and Wellness; **Vivien Lai**, Alberta Health and Wellness; **Corinne Schalm**, *The CAPITAL CARE Group*; **Susan Jurczak**, *The CAPITAL CARE Group*; **Connie Wark**, *The CAPITAL CARE Group*; **Lynne Mansell**, Capital Health; **Marguerite Rowe**, Capital Health; **Marlene Nordstrom**, Capital Health; **Nancy Hughes**, Calgary Health Region; **Deborah Katz**, Calgary Health Region; **Lorne Robertson**, Calgary Health Region; **Arlene Weidner**, Calgary Health Region; **Dr. Vicki Strang**, University of Alberta; **Dr. Michael Gillespie**, University of Alberta; **Dr. Gillian Currie**, University of Calgary.