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The Hospital Elder Life Program (HELP)

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Is Your Hospital in Need of HELP?

Welcome The hospital should be a place where older people can go to recover from their illnesses.

Older Adults/Caregivers

For Clinicians Yet, more than two million older Americans this year will develop delirium and functional decline during their inpatient care. These complications will result in increased morbidity and mortality, prolonged hospital stays, increased provider liability, a greater likelihood of needing long-term care and billions of dollars in excess health care costs. This scenario is not inevitable.

HELP Conference

The HELP Program

The HELP Model of Care

HELP Goals

HELP Background

HELP is on the way

Geriatric Team This section of the website provides general information about the background, goals, and implementation of the Hospital Elder Life Program. It also provides information about our dissemination activities to assist other institutions in implementing HELP. In an effort to make HELP more widely available, the HELP

Core Interventions

Volunteer Staff

Starting a Program

<http://hospitalelderlifeprogram.org>

HELP for Preventing Delirium

The Yale Delirium Prevention Trial compared the Hospital Elder Life Program (HELP) with usual hospital care in 852 patients aged > 70 years. The intervention significantly reduced the development of delirium, total number of days with delirium, total number of delirium episodes, and functional decline. It also proved cost-effective for lowering costs of hospital and nursing home services.

Since 2001, the Yale University team has focused on disseminating the HELP model to other hospitals. At <http://hospitalelderlifeprogram.org>, visitors can find details on the program, including downloadable information suitable for both patients and families. The site also links to research articles about the effective implementation of HELP, such as a cross-sectional survey of 13 HELP sites describing real-world implementation, adaptations, and successes; a quality improvement study evaluating the replication of HELP in a community hospital; and 2 before-and-after studies examining HELP effectiveness.

Research That Improves Veterans' Health Care

The Quality Enhancement Research Initiative (QUERI) studies new treatments, tests, and models of care and how those are incorporated into routine clinical practice. The QUERI researchers focus on 10 diseases and conditions that are common among veterans and that place a high burden on patients, family members, and the health system.

The QUERI centers also provide research expertise on such topics as improving data systems to track quality of care and developing clinical practice guidelines.

At <http://www.queri.research.va.gov>, visitors can click on links to Impact Updates that cover the latest on research goals, such as screening veterans for HIV or improving access to opioid agonist therapy. The Center Highlights features important work that will have an impact on the quality of care, such as the Spinal Cord Injury QUERI.

The Implementation Guide discusses lessons learned through the research implementation activities.

The Tools section for addressing alcohol misuse, for instance, includes video and dialogue examples of brief counseling. Visitors can also link to QUERI teleseminars, such as “My HealthVet: What Researchers Should Know about VA’s E-Health Website and Personal Health Records.”

QUERI supports a broad range of research, including short, rapid-response studies, and larger studies to test implementation strategies. Project opportunities are available for VA researchers, clinicians, and managers.

Spreading the Word About FAS

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration is working with Native American tribal leaders to develop culturally appropriate resources, provide training on prevention and intervention, and identify best practices in preventing and treating fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS). At the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) Center for Excellence website (<http://fasdcenter.samhsa.gov>), clicking on “Grab and Go” will allow visitors to access materials to help spread the word. Fact sheets explain FASD and give ideas on how to discuss them with patients. Brochures explain to women and their partners and families how to support alcohol-free pregnancies and encourage young Native Americans to learn more about FAS. Other materials include posters and print public service announcements that can be used as flyers and mailers, as well as books for children to help them understand siblings and friends with FAS.

Resources include links to screening, prevention, and intervention programs, as well as to local and state resources. ●