
CONFERENCE ABSTRACT**Through the Lens of Patients and Caregivers: Perspectives on Developing a Model for Integrated Care in East Toronto**

1st North American Conference on Integrated Care, Toronto, 4 - 7 October 2021

Anne Wojtak¹1: East Toronto Health Partners (ETHP), Canada

Introduction

The East Toronto Health Partners were one of the first Ontario Health Teams (a new model for integrated care in local communities) to launch in 2019. Our work builds on 25 years of collaboration among different organizations to improve local health care. The relationships and trust we have built across our organizational partners have enabled us to accelerate integrated care. Patients, caregivers and community members have been increasingly engaged in our efforts, but there is more work we can do to engage our whole community in helping improve the health of our population and redesign how care is delivered.

Aims Objectives Theory or Methods

The aim of this presentation is to share the story of the development of the East Toronto Health Partners Ontario Health Team through the lens of patients and caregivers who have been involved in the work. They will share their perspectives on what has worked well in advancing our integration work and where we have opportunities to improve. We will discuss what we have learned about best practices in engagement and co-design and how this applies in our local experience, as well as what is next in our plans to partner with our community to build a local integrated system.

Highlights or Results or Key Findings

In addition to being named as one of the first Ontario Health Teams, the East Toronto Health Partners have taken a number of important steps to advance our integrated care work with patient and caregiver partners, including having patient and caregiver representatives at every committee or table, establishing a community advisory council with diverse representation from our different communities, co-designing new approaches to care delivery with patients and caregivers, and mobilizing a grassroots community response to support our high needs neighbourhoods and at risk populations throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. We will share how patients, caregivers and community members contributed to these key milestones, what we learned, and next steps in our plans to broaden engagement of patients, caregivers and our community.

Conclusions

Engaging patients, caregivers and communities in co-designing integrated care is essential to develop a system that works better for all of us. It is important to share and learn about how to do this well and understand other ways to deepen the connection between care recipients and care providers.

Implications for applicability/transferability sustainability and limitations

The East Toronto Health Partners' efforts to create a local integrated system of care provides a model for other regions of Ontario as well as other jurisdictions. We look forward to sharing and learning with others about best practices in advancing integrated systems of care.