
CONFERENCE ABSTRACT**Digitally Integrating Acute and Long-Term Care**

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Introduction

Transfers between acute facilities and the community (namely long-term care homes) have long suffered from challenges to integrated care, often stemming from the current reliance on paper documentation, follow up phone calls, and discussions with the patient to enable transitions in care. Current processes are inefficient for staff and hinder quality care by increasing the risk of errors and readmissions.

PointClickCare, the leading electronic health record (EHR) provider for senior's care, is working to support this challenge through digital innovation. Their new product, Harmony, creates a two-way, digital integration between a hospital EMR and the EHR in long-term care.

Aims Objectives Theory or Methods

This presentation will provide an overview of Harmony, and its capabilities. It will focus on Harmony's benefits by highlighting the first implementation of Harmony in Canada, at St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton (SJHH).

SJHH implemented Harmony beginning in the Spring of 2020. Their focus was on validating the potential of an acute-LTC integration, using the hospital's Epic HIS system, and St. Joseph's Villa, a healthcare system partner LTC home that uses PointClickCare. Key areas of focus for project evaluation included validating the clinician experience, timeliness of information being shared, and ease of access to the information within clinical workflows.

Highlights or Results or Key Findings

Results from the project evaluation will be shared, including positive results from clinician surveys and interviews, as well as efficiency and time savings resulting from data integration incorporated into the admission and discharge processes.

The presentation will also provide insights on the potential for tools like Harmony to enable integrated care coordination and population health management, which are key enablers of successful models of integrated care. Real-time population health dashboards can support the success of innovative approaches to integrated care, such as the Ontario Health Teams (OHTs) and Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs) in the United States.

Conclusions

The ability to digitally integrate acute and long-term care can provide numerous benefits, including workflow efficiencies and improved clinical decision-making across the continuum. It also supports strengthening the relationship between hospitals and community providers, which are foundational to quality care as we begin to apply lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Implications for applicability/transferability sustainability and limitations

Compared to other digital innovations, this innovation has a unique opportunity to scale and spread across Ontario, particularly in support of the new OHT integrated care model. Harmony is also EMR 'agnostic' so it can be implemented at both Epic and non-Epic hospitals.