Person Centred Care in the Community Reduces Impact of Disease and Improves Quality of Life for Patients with COPD

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Introduction

In Scotland, approximately 100,000 people live with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD). Glasgow has the largest rate of hospital admissions nationally with 600 patients in the NW Glasgow at high risk of being admitted to hospital.

Aims of NW Glasgow Community Respiratory Team are:
- To avoid unnecessary, unscheduled hospital admissions by treatment of the patient suffering from an exacerbation of COPD in the home setting as an alternative to hospital admission.
- To facilitate the early discharge from hospital, working closely with the Early Supported Discharge team to reduce length of inpatient stay.

Methods

- A Physiotherapy led multidisciplinary team with input from Occupational Therapy and Pharmacy.
- Links with Respiratory Nurse Specialists provide rapid response and joint assessment.
- A comprehensive assessment is undertaken with individualised care plans set including person centred goal setting.
- Interventions include: self management strategies, breathing control, pacing and positioning, airways clearance, review of medication & inhalers, anxiety management, home based pulmonary rehabilitation, provision of equipment to maximise patients function e.g. commodes etc.

Results

- 94% of patients at risk of hospital admission were seen within 1 day with 80% avoiding hospital admission.
- Patient feedback echo clinical findings with improvements both in activity attainment and hospital admissions shown.
- Outcome measurements used to evaluate the impact of the disease and the quality of life e.g. COPD Assessment Test (CAT) and EQ5D demonstrated statistically significant improvements post intervention

Patient quote regarding impact from the team:
“Everything possible to be honest with you, they saved me going to the hospital. They showed me my medication I had been taking was wrong. They fixed all that out. I wouldn’t have known what to do without the girls. The physiotherapist arranged for me to get a delta and went over my nebulisers. The occupational therapist arranged for a bath thing for my daughter to help me get a bath”

Conclusion

- The Community Respiratory Team is shown to be a viable and beneficial alternative to hospital admission in the treatment of patients with COPD who are unwell.
- Improvements in the impact of disease and quality of life is expected to reduce the number and/or length of future inpatient stays.