

Title of Intervention: Web-Based Education and Counseling Program for Older Heart Failure Patients

Intervention Strategies: Individual Education, Supportive Relationships

Purpose of the Intervention: To facilitate self-care and symptom management in older adults with heart failure

Population: Patients 60 years of age and older with heart failure symptoms

Setting: Website; home-based

Partners: University-affiliated heart failure clinic, Advisory Group of 3 patients and 3 nurse practitioners, researchers

Intervention Description:

- Individual Education: A website provided a 12-week program to educate participants on heart failure and symptom management. Participants were mailed simple instructions about the computer and Internet usage and a simple written user guide to the website. The website program provided 3 modules on cardiovascular health, external links to video content, electronic submission of clinical info (weight, exercise activity, diuretic use, nutritional logs) and interactive disease management tools. Specific topics included self care management, risk factor modification, depression anxiety, power of attorney and advanced directives.
- Supportive Relationships: Participants were encouraged to e-mail health care providers. Family members were encouraged to participate in the program. An online support forum was available for group discussion among participants.

Theory: Not mentioned

Resources Required:

- Staff/Volunteers: Health care providers
- Training: Not mentioned
- Technology: Web design
- Space: Not mentioned
- Budget: Not mentioned
- Intervention: Computer, unique use identification and password, written user guide, internet connection, guide for computer, internet and program use
- Evaluation: Assessment tools

Evaluation:

- Design: Quasi-experimental, nonequivalent
- Methods and Measures:
 - Demographic and health history form
 - SF-12 survey assessed physical health (physical function, limitations due to physical health, bodily pain, general health, vitality, social functioning, role limitation due to emotional problems, mental health)
 - Control Attitude Scale assessed degree of control patient feels related to health status

Outcomes:

- Short term Impact: The intervention group experienced an improvement in mental health and quality of life. There was no significant improvement in the physical health component.
- Long Term Impact: Not measured

Maintenance: Not mentioned

Lessons Learned: A majority of participants reported that the program was an easy-to-use method to find high-quality, up-to-date information relevant to heart failure self-care. They suggested it was better than

existing methods to access information and could change the way they managed their health. The development study supports the fact that older patients, even with limited computer skills, will take the extra step to gain access and learn how to use internet accessible programs to obtain information about their condition and guidance with the efforts to manage their care. Web-based education and counseling programs designed for older heart failure individuals can be implemented with potential for modest benefit in quality of life and perceived control.

Citation(s):

Evangelista, L. S., A. Stromberg, et al. (2006). "Developing a Web-based education and counseling program for heart failure patients." *Prog Cardiovasc Nurs* 21(4): 196-201.

Westlake, C., L. S. Evangelista, et al. (2007). "Evaluation of a Web-based education and counseling pilot program for older heart failure patients." *Prog Cardiovasc Nurs* 22(1): 20-6.