Transitions of Care Across the Continuum

Alzheimer’s Association of CT
Education Conference
March 27, 2012
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Definition of Transitions of Care Across the Continuum?

Transitional Care is defined as a set of actions designed to ensure the coordination and continuity of health care as patients transfer between different locations or levels of care within the same location.

It is based on a comprehensive plan of care and health care practitioners who have current informational about the patients’ goals, preference and clinical status.

Journal of the American Geriatric Society
Issues

- Medication errors
- Poor communication
- Poor coordination between providers
- Rising incidence of preventable adverse reactions
- Fragmentation
- Limited resources

Consumers and caregivers are often the only consistent element during transitions and are frequently expected to serve an active role without adequate information or tools to successfully perform this function.
They Must Be…..

- Educated about:
  - Dementia
  - Emotional issues
  - Options available
    - Types of senior living communities
    - Alternatives to moving
  - Need for long range planning
  - Resources
    - Services for individual
    - Support for family/loved ones

Important

When caregivers are knowledgeable about the needs and options of an individual they can make a decision that will ensure their loved one will get the care he or she needs and wants.

Knowledge and Planning are Keys to Successful Transitions

- Functional Capacity
- Cognitive Abilities
- Caregiver Ability
- Understanding of medical concerns
  - Medications
  - Treatments
Factors to Consider

- Recognizing the need
  - Problems with falls/balance
  - Medication mishaps
  - Household crisis
  - Signs of depression/isolation
  - Weight loss
  - Poor/changed hygiene
  - Change/inappropriate behavior
  - Cognitive changes

Additional Considerations

- Emotional Complexities
  - Individuals life experience
  - "Stiff upper lip" generation
  - Asking for help sign of failure/shame
  - One job. One wife. One house.
  - Frightened of change
  - Role reversal—children trying to be in charge
  - Loss of independence/control

Other Concerns

- Current Support Systems
  - Family/friends
  - Isolation/loneliness
  - Personal fears (safety/home maintenance)
  - Transportation
  - Caregiver burnout
Needs Based Assessment

- Health Concerns
  - Multiple chronic diseases requiring ongoing management
    - Diabetes
    - CHF
    - Arthritis
    - Respiratory Disease
    - Hearing Impairment
    - Poor Vision

Cognition

- Judgment/decision assessing beyond Mini-Mental
  - Can they or do they know to call 911?
  - What about smoke/fire?
  - Some at the door?
  - Caregiver accident/sudden illness

Temperament

- Anxiety
- Aggression
- Depression
- Anger
- Denial
Functional Considerations

- Mobility
  - Ambulation
  - Balance
- ADL Ability
- Equipment Concerns/Needs
  - Proper use of existing equipment
  - Need for equipment

Successful Transitions Must:

- Include comprehensive assessment
- Ability to communicate ALL necessary information
- Collaboration with providers
- Honest conversation about individuals needs, abilities and prognosis

Successful Transitions Require Knowledgeable Caregivers

- In Home Care
  - Skilled Care
    - Licensed home care agencies
  - Companion/Homemaker
    - Both licensed and non-medical home care agencies
  - Personal Care
    - Non-medical agencies
- Private Duty
  - Non-medical agencies
Informed Consent

Adult Day Centers

- Adult day care is a planned program of activities designed to promote well-being through social and health-related services.
- Adult day care centers provide a supportive, cheerful environment.
- Adult day care centers can be public or private, non-profit or for-profit. The intent of an adult day care center is primarily two-fold:
  - To provide older adults an opportunity to get out of the house and receive both mental and social stimulation.
  - To give caregivers a much-needed break in which to attend to personal needs, or simply rest and relax.

Assisted Living

Long term care option that combines housing, supportive services and health-care to promote an independent lifestyle with customized assistance.

Staff available to meet scheduled and unscheduled needs.
Benefits of Assisted Living

- Safety
  - Staff support
  - Emergency response systems
  - Environment conducive to decreased mobility, poor vision

Dementia Specific Assisted Living

- All benefits of Assisted Living
- Staff trained in dementia care
- Environment specially designed for dementia clients
- Activities designed to slow the decline of cognitive function
- May be a specialized unit or facility

Long-term care facility

- Provides long-term care to individuals who require ongoing nursing care and supervision.
  Most nursing homes have services and staff to address issues such as nutrition, care planning, recreation, spirituality and medical care.
  Nursing homes are usually licensed by the state and regulated by the federal government.
Alzheimer special care units (SCUs)

- Designed to meet the specific needs of individuals with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. SCUs can take many forms and exist within various types of residential care. Such units most often are cluster settings in which persons with dementia are grouped together on a floor or a unit within a larger residential care facility.

Long Term Care Facility

- Application to long term care facilities should be part of the care plan for all individuals with dementia.
- Dementia beds are scarce and lists are long.
  - Don’t need to take bed if offered but should get on lists of facilities.

Decision Making is Difficult

- All factors must be considered.
- Decision must be based on good judgment not emotion.
- Once environment is determined move quickly and remain positive.
- Confrontation is not productive.
- SAFETY # 1 CONSIDERATION.
- Social & Recreational Activities
  - Evidence of organized activities?
  - Schedule posted?
  - Is there resident participation?
  - Pets?
  - Outdoor spaces?
  - Trips?

- Food Service
  - Dining room menus vary?
  - Number of meals per day?
  - Snacks?
  - Special food requests?
  - Common dining areas? Set times?
  - Can resident eat in their unit?

- Atmosphere
  - Homelike?
  - Pleasant staff? Interact with residents by name?
  - Residents socialize with each other?
  - Do they appear happy and comfortable?
  - Is staff professional/respectful?
  - Are visits with residents welcome at any time?
Physical Features
- Well designed to meet individual needs?
- Easily accessible by all?
- Good lighting?
- Non-skid floors?
- Clearly marked exits
- Means of security for wanderers?

Needs Assessments, Contracts, Costs
- Written plan for each resident?
- Process of assessing potential residents?
- Contractual agreement?
  - Admission?
  - If needs change?

Medication/Healthcare
- Medication management how does it work?
- Staff person coordinate care?
- Emergency Procedures?
- What medical services are available?
- Staffing?
Services
- List of available services
- Staff 24/7 to assist with ADLs
- Housekeeping services
- Transportation
- Pharmacy/hairdresser/therapy?

The Transition Period
- Be patient/go slow-getting settled takes time and support
- Do not neglect health issues-see family MD prior to move
- Be aware of signs of depression/sadness/anxiety
- Personal belongings-comfort/continuity
- Enlist staff to welcome and help with move