Increasing the Number of Healthy Lifestyle Conversations that a Multi-disciplinary Community Team has with Patients

RELEVANCE

The population of older people, nationally and locally, is rapidly growing and many are not living in good health which not only has significant economic and resource implications but more importantly impacts on individual quality of life in later years.

In recognition of this ‘perfect storm’ the importance of embedding prevention strategies and health promotion interventions specific to older people is widely recognised.

AIM

The project was initiated following a record keeping audit which identified that healthy lifestyle conversations were recorded in only 19% of Integrated Community Team (ICT) clinical records. It aimed to increase the number of documented healthy lifestyle conversations that clinicians have with ICT patients.

METHODS

To understand the low audit result 31 staff were surveyed. The survey showed that 45% of staff were not having healthy lifestyle conversations with patients with three main reasons: lack of knowledge, lack of confidence and perceived barriers.

From this information a project plan was developed using Plan Do Study Act (PDSA) cycles to test change ideas and enable methodical evaluation of each implementation phase.

RESULTS

24 staff attended ‘MECC Plus’ training, MECC adapted for ICT’s, and also contributed into the design/content of a new electronic tool to capture healthy lifestyle conversations.

Evaluation of this intervention is as follows:

- Attendees all reported finding the MECC training relevant and confidence that it was applicable to practice.
- 83% of staff had positively altered their practice when surveyed 2 months post training.
- Case studies demonstrate some significant changes in practice.

CONCLUSIONS

- MECC training, adapted for a multidisciplinary community team, was effective at embedding behaviour change in staff and may have initiated a culture shift.
- Further work is required to address issues with the electronic record so that the reported increase in healthy lifestyle conversations can be captured.

IMPLICATIONS

For practice: Provision of MECC training, specifically tailored to older people, alongside supportive resources should be considered in other trusts and wider settings.

For management: All staff working in community settings with predominantly older people should be ‘MECC Plus’ trained.

For education: Health promotion interventions specific to older people should be included in undergraduate training. Research is needed to establish the impact that ‘MECC Plus’ may have on health outcomes for older people.

REFERENCES

- Goldman A (date unknown) Pit Stop Checks: Lessons from Formula One and other High Risk Industries

AUTHOR

Charlotte Tucker – Professional Lead Physiotherapist – Gloucestershire Care Services NHS Trust  charlotte.tucker@glos-care.nhs.uk

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