



PAIN BC'S CONNECT FOR HEALTH PROGRAM: ADDRESSING UNMET SOCIO-ECONOMIC NEEDS OF PATIENTS LIVING WITH CHRONIC PAIN

Vanessa Brcic, MD, CCFP, CGIMS, MSc (candidate)

University of British Columbia

Student/Trainee

POSTER ABSTRACT

Background:

Research describes a strong link between poverty and poor health outcomes. However, interventions to help patients meet basic socio-economic needs (i.e. food and housing) are rarely found within our health care system or in the context of pain care.

Objectives:

In 2014-2015, Pain BC and Basics for Health Society launched a province-wide program:

- 1) To identify unmet socio-economic needs of people living with chronic pain in BC;
- 2) To connect patients to appropriate community resources to address unmet needs;
- 3) To train the next generation of health care providers in the delivery of compassionate, patient-centered care.

Overview:

Connect for Health (C4H) recruits and trains post-secondary students to provide “help beyond the doctor’s office” as resource connection volunteers. Patients self-refer to the program or are referred by their health care provider. After conducting an intake interview, volunteers research relevant services and follow up with the patient by phone and email.

Evaluation:

Approximately 300 people were served by C4H in its first year. Patients resided in all BC health regions, represented different age groups, employment and income statuses and had varied needs. 2/3 were female.

Patients had an average of 2.5 unmet basic needs. 67% of clients identified needs related to health services. 30% identified needs related to support groups and income security. 19/22 clients surveyed were very or somewhat supported by C4H. 15/22 clients found information provided to be somewhat or very useful. Complexity of client needs and varied availability of services across BC were important factors in resource connection.

OTHER AUTHORS

Maria Hudspith; Sarah Dobson