Transition and Transfer of Pediatric Heart Transplant Patients to Adult Healthcare: Abstract

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NR.210.899: Project Evaluation

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April 9, 2021

"I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this assignment." CMI

Abstract

Background: Pediatric heart transplant patients are living into late adolescents and adulthood, necessitating strategies to help mitigate the high risk for adverse outcomes during the period of transition and transfer to an adult healthcare model and team. The purpose of this quality improvement project was to implement and evaluate the impact of a transition readiness program on pediatric heart transplant patients.

Methods: Using a pre-post study design, a transition readiness program was implemented during a multidisciplinary heart transplant clinic. Transition readiness questionnaires, adapted from the American Society of Transplantation, were used to evaluate progress through the transition readiness program. Average scores for transition readiness domains were compared pre- and post-intervention.

Results: Of 27 eligible patients, 25 were enrolled in the transition readiness program. In the 11 to 13-year age group there was an increase in average scores in all domains, with the greatest increase in how I feel about myself (pre = 1.167, post = 1.400). In the 14 to 16-year age group there was an increase in average scores all domains except going to school/my future (pre = 1.542, post = 1.533) and how I feel about myself (pre = 0.500, post = 0.400). The domain with the greatest improvement was medications (pre = 1.500, post = 2.333). In the 17 to 22-year age group there was an increase in average scores in all domains except how I feel about myself (pre = 0.955, post = 0.864). The domain with greatest improvement was reproductive health (pre = 1.467, post = 1.909).

Conclusion: This pilot study showed promising results indicating the implementation of transition readiness programs can improve transition readiness in pediatric heart transplant patients. Further studies are needed to determine if improvement in transition readiness will lead to better compliance and reduced adverse events during the transition period.