

Here's how Sunnybrook is leading the way...

Transforming Surgical Follow-up Care Through New Provider Roles: Advanced Practice Physiotherapists at the Holland Orthopaedic & Arthritic Centre

This innovative project addresses the need to improve and standardize follow-up care for patients undergoing hip and knee replacement and transfers responsibility for this care from overly busy Orthopaedic Surgeons to Advanced Practice Physiotherapists. A practice

change was indicated based on increased surgical volumes, surgeon clinic workload and the expressed need for more patient education at follow-up. This project emphasizes interdisciplinary collaboration and leverages the skills and expertise of Advanced Practice

Physiotherapists. Patient and Surgeon satisfaction has been very positive. This project has broad applicability and can be easily transferred to other populations to improve service delivery.

Objectives:

The objective of this project was to improve the quality of postoperative care for patients undergoing hip and knee replacement surgery by standardizing the frequency of postoperative follow-up visits and introducing a role for Advanced Practice Physiotherapists to manage the follow-up care. A change in practice was indicated based on significant increases in surgical volumes and the inability of the Orthopaedic Surgeons to keep up with patient follow-up visits while at the same time increasing access for new patients requiring care. Patient and surgeon input was sought through focus groups. Patients identified a need for increased education and information to support self-management in their recovery, which they were unable to access during busy follow-up clinics. Our Program represents an opportunity to further leverage the role of Advanced Practice Physiotherapists being introduced in Ontario LHINs to triage and assess patients preoperatively before consultation with the surgeon in this patient population.

Results Overview:

- A consensus process among surgeons and APP's resulted in standardized guidelines and reduced frequency of follow-up visits and x-rays in the first year.
- An early satisfaction survey of patients (n=123) attending either a surgeon (n=60) or an APP led clinic (n=63), demonstrated high satisfaction with no significant difference (p=0.344) between the mean clinic scores.
- Over 1800 patients have been seen this year in follow-up by APP's. Clinics operate five days per week and a telephone support line has been introduced to provide patients with access to advice between clinic visits.
- A recent study of 400 patients seen in follow-up by an APP confirmed that patient satisfaction remains high. Clinical variances represent the largest reason that APPs request consultation with the surgeons. 10% of the patients asked to see the surgeon at the time of follow-up, but 60% of these requests were solely to thank the surgeon.

The success of this project has generated a great deal of interest from other organizations and led to numerous presentations, site visits, consultations and publications to share our experience. An Advanced Practice Portal has been developed to share key resources with other sites interested in developing similar roles, and a National Arthroplasty Advanced Practice Physiotherapist Network has been established to support knowledge translation.



Resources:

Robarts S, Kennedy D, MacLeod A, Findlay H and Gollish G. A Framework for the Development and Implementation of an Advanced Practice Role for Physiotherapists That Improves Access and Quality of Care for Patients. Healthcare Quarterly 11(2): 67-75, 2008.

Portal Website Address:

<http://portal.sunnybrook.ca/app/default.aspx>

The email address associated with the site is app@sunnybrook.ca

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