

Change Idea: Caregivers as Partners E-Learning

Why an E-Learning Suite?

Recognizing the need for practical and tangible education around how to partner with caregivers, The Change Foundation in partnership with the four Changing CARE teams across Ontario, collaborated with health care providers, patients/clients and caregivers to co-design the Caregivers as Partners learning suite.

This series of three modules provides learners with practical information and tools to engage, support and empower caregivers with the aim of improving the family caregiver experience:

1. Understanding the Role of Caregivers
2. Communicating with Caregivers
3. Empowering Caregivers

Process

Project teams, along with patient and family caregiver partners collaborated with The Change Foundation to establish the main themes to be covered in the learning suite. A technology company was hired by The Change Foundation to take our content and build into three interactive modules.

In January 2019, the modules were available in our learning management system for initial testing. At St. Joseph's Health Care London (St. Joseph's), we recruited 16 staff from across the organization to review the modules and provide feedback. We were strategic in selecting participants and recruited individuals to represent a variety of roles across the organization (e.g. nursing, physician, allied health, security, food services, leadership, etc.).

Staff feedback was overwhelmingly positive towards the learning modules. Many agreed these modules are important for all staff to complete, however the time (30 minutes/module) was noted as a concern. Based on feedback from other test sites, The Change Foundation made modifications to the modules, including creating a 25 minute "Refresher" module that covers content from all three modules. This module could be completed every two years as an ongoing reminder.

CARING FOR THE BODY, MIND & SPIRIT SINCE 1869

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The final modules were integrated into St. Joseph’s learning system and tailored to align with the organizations branding and policies.

Implementation of the Module Suite

As of March 1st, 2020, all staff at St. Joseph’s are required to complete the Introduction to Caregivers as Partners module.

Example Slides – Content, Videos, Interactive Activities

<h3>Learning Objectives</h3> <p>Upon completion of this module, you will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Recognize caregivers as valued members of the patient’s/client’s care team ✓ Utilize practical tips to enhance communication with family caregivers ✓ Determine practices and behaviours that can help you support and empower caregivers 	 <h3>Video Clip Reflection</h3> <p>As you watched Pat’s story...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What stood out the most for you about the experience? • What did you learn about caregivers that you did not know before? • What stood out to you about Pat’s role?
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<h3>3 Step Approach to Caregiver Communication</h3>  <p>Step 1: Identify & meet with the family caregiver Step 2: Just Ask, “How are you doing?” Step 3: Follow through and be responsive!</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="146 1270 332 1522"> <p>Step 1</p> <p>After identifying the caregiver (with the patient/client’s consent):</p> <p>Create an opportunity to speak with the caregiver individually so they can freely share.</p> <p>This recognizes them as a partner in care.</p> </td> <td data-bbox="341 1270 527 1522"> <p>Step 2</p> <p>Rather than “how are you coping” ask “how are you doing?” This extends an invitation for caregivers to share.</p> <p>Understanding the caregiver helps with creating the right care plan for the patient/client and their support system.</p> </td> <td data-bbox="535 1270 722 1522"> <p>Step 3</p> <p>Act on the needs and/or request of caregivers. If you are unable to help directly, let the caregiver know you will find someone who will rather than saying “I don’t know”</p> <p>This helps caregivers feel heard & validated.</p> </td> </tr> </table> <p><small>From Module 2 – Communicating with Caregivers</small></p>	<p>Step 1</p> <p>After identifying the caregiver (with the patient/client’s consent):</p> <p>Create an opportunity to speak with the caregiver individually so they can freely share.</p> <p>This recognizes them as a partner in care.</p>	<p>Step 2</p> <p>Rather than “how are you coping” ask “how are you doing?” This extends an invitation for caregivers to share.</p> <p>Understanding the caregiver helps with creating the right care plan for the patient/client and their support system.</p>	<p>Step 3</p> <p>Act on the needs and/or request of caregivers. If you are unable to help directly, let the caregiver know you will find someone who will rather than saying “I don’t know”</p> <p>This helps caregivers feel heard & validated.</p>	<h3>Practicing Positive Mental Habits</h3> <p>Caregivers can experience a range of emotions that symbolize the caregiving journey. They may feel appreciated and satisfied at times. But also may experience emotions such as frustration, anxiety, and anger.</p> <p>Providers can support the wellbeing of caregivers by encouraging them to practice positive mental habits:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="787 1291 933 1501"> <p>Avoid Guilt</p> <p>Help caregivers recognize that they will have a range of different feelings and that is okay.</p> </td> <td data-bbox="950 1291 1128 1501"> <p>Notice the Positive</p> <p>Encourage caregivers to write down one positive thing each day or week. This can help make the experience of that day become better.</p> </td> <td data-bbox="1144 1291 1323 1501"> <p>Gather Strength from Others</p> <p>Recommend caregivers join a support group, and be social. This can help foster strength and resilience.</p> </td> </tr> </table> <p><small>From Module 3 – Empowering Caregivers</small></p> <p><small>National Alliance on Mental Illness, n.d. The Change Foundation, 2016</small></p>	<p>Avoid Guilt</p> <p>Help caregivers recognize that they will have a range of different feelings and that is okay.</p>	<p>Notice the Positive</p> <p>Encourage caregivers to write down one positive thing each day or week. This can help make the experience of that day become better.</p>	<p>Gather Strength from Others</p> <p>Recommend caregivers join a support group, and be social. This can help foster strength and resilience.</p>
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