

Case Study: Pilot Pragmatic Clinical Trial to Embed Tele-Savvy into Health Care Systems

An NIA IMPACT Pilot Study

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Rationale/Objectives of Pilot Study

- **Rationale:** Interventions offering meaningful benefits to care partners of older adults with ADRD would be attractive to office-based practitioners if a pragmatic linkage could be made between these interventions and outpatient health care settings.
- **Objectives:**
 - Embed a pragmatic care partner identification and invitation strategy into the daily workflow of outpatient centers, enabling care partners to join online efficacious dementia care education programs, specifically Tele-Savvy and Caregiving During Crisis.
 - Evaluate Tele-Savvy effectiveness, compared to Caregiving During Crisis, when offered pragmatically.
 - Determine viability of routinely collecting and storing care partner outcomes data into electronic health record systems.
 - Evaluate implementation of all of the above.

Setting/Population/Design

- **Setting:** Geriatric medicine and dementia care outpatient centers in two health care systems:
 - UConn Health: Geriatrics Associates
 - Emory Healthcare: Integrated Memory Care Clinic¹
- **Population:** 100 care partners of older adults living with ADRD who are patients in one of the two outpatient care settings.
- **Design:** Care partners at each site will be randomized in 3 waves to receive either Tele-Savvy or Caregiving During Crisis

¹Clevenger C, et al. *J Am Geriatr Soc* 2018 Dec;66(12):2401-2407.

Interventions

Tele-Savvy¹

- 7-week synchronous and asynchronous program for care partners
- Care partners join an on-line class for weekly educational sessions and access Tele-Savvy website resources to help them learn more.
- Topics include dementia symptom management, environmental changes to enhance quality of life for care partner and person living with ADRD, and self-care for the care partner.

Caregiving During Crisis

- Online, asynchronous, self-guided education course designed to help care partners ensure safety of persons with dementia and themselves during COVID-19 pandemic.
- Topics include strategies for creating safe home space, safely leaving and re-entering the home, safely allowing service personnel into the home, and risk management beyond COVID-19 restrictions.

¹Hepburn K, et al. *Gerontologist*, 2021, doi:10.1093/geront/gnab029

Outcomes

- **Primary outcome** is self-reported caregiving mastery¹
- **Secondary outcomes** are self-reported care partner reactions to memory and behavior problems², and self-reported perceived stress³
- All outcomes used in Tele-Savvy efficacy clinical trial.

¹Pearlin L.I. et al. *Gerontologist*, 30(5), 583–594. ²Teri L et al. *Psychology & Aging*, 7, 622–631.

³Cohen S et al. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 24(4), 385–396.

Implementation Evaluation

- Guiding framework: Normalization Process Theory¹
- Account for individual participant and organizational factors that influence implementation
- Determine potential to sustain Tele-Savvy as a care partner support offering and the routine use of care partner assessment tools in the participating health care systems.

Murray E et al. BMC Medicine 2010, 8:63

Implementation Evaluation

- Stakeholder interviews will help determine feasibility, acceptability, sustainability of implementation.
- Stakeholders include:
 - care partners
 - clinicians and clinician assistants
 - Tele Savvy group facilitators
 - IT staff responsible for producing technical enhancements in EHR systems to routinize care partner invitations, care partner data capture, and care partner data storage in EHR records.

Current Status of Implementation

- Emory site has enrolled first wave of care partners; Tele-Savvy program ongoing.
- UConn site preparing to invite care partners using EHR system and clinician verification of care partners identified in patient EHRs.
 - First wave of care partners will be randomized and Tele-Savvy program started in January 2022.

Impact

- If this pilot study successfully achieves its objectives, we will be poised to design a multi-site embedded pragmatic trial engaging sites from the large pool of geriatric and dementia care clinics nationwide.
- Our long-term goals are to:
 - routinely offer Tele-Savvy and other evidence-based education and support programs to care partners of persons living at home with ADRD
 - routinely store care partner outcome data, in health care systems that provide outpatient care to persons living with ADRD and their families.

Study Team Members

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