

How Our eShift Palliative Care Program is Helping Deliver Better Care

 carepartners.ca/how-our-eshift-palliative-care-program-is-helping-deliver-better-care/

3/20/2015

March 20, 2015

What is eShift?

At CarePartners we are often asked about our eShift program for patients receiving palliative care at home. The program is relatively new and uses mobile technology to support collaboration between nurses and Personal Support Workers (PSWs), many people are curious about how the program actually works.

PSWs are the Eyes, Ears and Hands of the Nurse

eShift was started by the South West CCAC. The program uses an innovative model of care delivery to provide high quality palliative care to patients in their homes so that family members can enjoy a good night's rest. With e-Shift, a Registered Nurse experienced in palliative care, provides nursing care using her (or his) computer throughout the night. The nurse is in her own home. A special software program developed by Sensory Technologies connects the nurse and her computer to 4 specially trained PSWs via iPhones –each of these 4 PSWs is in the home of a patient receiving end-of-life care. The PSW becomes the eyes, ears and hands of the nurse.

Ensuring Comfort

Once the PSW arrives at the patient's home often around 11 pm, family members who have been caring for the patient all day can go to bed. The PSW greets the patient and uses the iPhone and a shared electronic chart to communicate with the remote nurse about how the patient is doing, this includes important information such as: does the patient have pain or does the patient have other symptoms that make rest difficult for the patient. The nurse at the computer analyzes the information, asks the PSW or the patient more questions if needed, and then directs the PSW on how to care for the patient. This may include providing the patient with medications that the family has pre-poured, helping the patient find a comfortable position, or often, sitting and talking to the patient about the patient's concerns.

Throughout the night, the PSW uses the iPhone to communicate with the nurse and tells the nurse how the patient is doing and the nurse responds with recommendations and directions, all with the purpose of ensuring the patient is comfortable and supported, while family members sleep. If the patient has a sudden new problem such as shortness of breath the nurse gives the PSW clear directions on how to help the patient and as a team they work together to ensure the patient is once again comfortable. In the morning, family members who wake up after an unbroken night of sleep, feel much better prepared to take on a day of caregiving.

Why Families Like E-Shift

This approach has worked so well that family members consistently report that once the CCAC put eShift into place they can finally relax and truly get a deep sleep. Patients who want to stay at home during their last days often feel like they are now less of a burden for their families, and they too relax. Most importantly most eShift patients get their wish and stay at home until the very end of their life because their symptoms are well managed by a health care team that covers not only day time care but also night time care.

Want to learn more about eShift? Contact charlotte.koso@carepartners.ca