

Targeting rural community resources to high risk EMS users



Olympic Area Agency on Aging
Rural Emergency Medical Service Providers



O3A Background

- **One of 13 Area Agencies on Aging**
- **Total population= 197,850**
- **Total age 60 and over = 34% (67,550)**
- **Counties: Clallam, Jefferson, Grays Harbor & Pacific Counties**
- **Rural service region**

O3A /Responder Project in Two Rural Counties: Grays Harbor & Pacific Counties

High hospital readmission rates

Medically underserved, with shortage of health professionals

Residents less likely to have regular primary care provider

Grays Harbor & Pacific Counties:

1 provider: 2,300 residents

Washington State:

1 provider: 1,200 residents

No urgent care centers

Distance to local hospital, clinics: 30 minutes-2+ hours

Many older adults lack transportation or are too frail to access public transit.

Pilot Project:

Reducing Falls in Home-Bound Older Adults

Coordination with local fire departments

- Informal
- Provided information and written materials

Reducing Falls at Home with South Beach EMS

- Pilot project targeting older adults at risk of future falls falling
- Expand pilot to two additional EMS regions
- Expand referral criteria

Reducing Falls at Home

- **Links patients with previous falls, or high risk for falling to O3A case management services**
- **Developed interagency consent---screening, referral protocols & forms**
- **Provided training for EMS crews in local resources through O3A Information & Assistance (I&A) staff**
- **“One-stop” referral process—email or fax to a single O3A number**
- **Team approach: Social Work specialist and RN**
- **Regular feedback to EMS on patient outcomes**

Project Referral Profile

Expanded project: 160 rural, community-dwelling adults

- 60% female**
- Age range 34 – 93; average age: 75**
- 95% Caucasian**
- Majority dealing with multiple chronic conditions: diabetes, stroke, cancer, multiple sclerosis, recent falls**

Patient Interventions



- **Initial telephone call to obtain consent, home visit(s) by Information & Assistance Specialist / Registered Nurse**
- **Assessment of patient's needs, including health/medical; legal; financial; home security & safety issues; availability of support (friends, family, neighbors); need for personal care.**
- **Determine eligibility for support / services; assistance to enroll.**

Patient Interventions



- Referral to appropriate local services, including medical/health providers, DSHS, Home & Community Services, O3A nurses, local energy assistance, legal and law enforcement services, family care giver support, home safety specialists/contractors.
- Assistance contacting medical providers, family members.

Community Paramedicine

- **Community paramedicine can fill the gap in rural areas**
- **Expanded roles for EMTs**
- **Mobile integrated healthcare- emerging concept**
- **Organized system of services**
 - **Primary Health Care (prevent readmissions)**
 - **Community coordination (connects patients to local resources)**

Pilot Project: Reducing Falls at Home

South Beach EMS Director, Russ McClintock:

“We feel the program worked. During the first quarter we had 51 calls for fall patients. During the next three months, we were down to 35. I feel this is a direct result of getting help to those that had the most to benefit from the services and recommendations you had to offer. In a small community, word of anything gets around fast. We have been thanked by many people for the service offered.”

Olympic Area Agency on Aging

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