

Ask the Expert



calgary health region

Coordinated by Dr. Paddy Quail, Medical Director, Calgary Health Region Authority.



Question:

What is a program of all-inclusive care for the elderly (PACE)? Are there similar Canadian models?

Diana Turner, MSc, MD,
CCFP, replies.

Response:

The first program in Canada was the System of Integrated Services for the Frail Elderly (SIPA) in Montreal, Quebec. There are now programs in Edmonton, Calgary, and Lethbridge, Alberta. Programs in other areas of Canada are under development.

PACE is based on the premise of helping frail seniors remain in their home by offering comprehensive and integrated health services. The interdisciplinary team involves several people (Table 1). Twenty-four hour care is provided through a telehealth monitoring service along with a 24-hour on call service to a program nurse and physician. On-site treatment and/or respite beds are used for much needed respite to caregivers, early

discharges from hospital, or to prevent hospital admission. Patients visit the program on a weekly basis for care needs that would otherwise require admission to a long-term care facility, as well as for socialization.

These programs are not designed to replace the 24-hour structured care available in long-term care facilities. Some patient's will eventually require that level of care. Many will remain in the program until their death.

Why the model works

In Canada, the programs continue to be evaluated by independent reviewers for user satisfaction, health outcomes, and cost-effectiveness.

The success of each program relies on adapting to the various and specific needs of the community. The programs remain integrated within the health-care region at large through services provided in acute care and by specialty clinics and physicians.

Its limitations

Developing a program takes an initial time and financial

Table 1

Interdisciplinary team

- Patient
- Family caregivers
- Transport drivers
- Personal care aids
- Home help
- Physicians
- Nurses
- Pharmacists
- LPNs
- Nursing assistants
- Social worker
- Rehabilitation specialists
- Recreational specialists
- Dietitian
- Administrative assistants

LPN: Licensed practical nurse

commitment before the benefits are realized. Patients and health-care providers need to be educated on the benefits of the program. Program catchment areas must be established so as to limit travel time of frail patients to the centre.

Suggested Readings

1. Eng C, et al: Program of all-inclusive care for the elderly (PACE): An innovative model of integrated geriatric care and financing. *JAGS* 1997; 45:223-32.
2. Williams T: PACE: A Continuing evolving success. *JAGS* 1997; 45:224.
3. Dallaire L: Solidage Research Group: SIPA Research Program. <http://www.solidage.ca/e/sipa.htm>