



RESEARCH BRIEF

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Older adults in an Integrated Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) model of Primary Care in Singapore reported better satisfaction of needs and self-management of health

Research article: Impact of a patient-centered medical home demonstration on quality of life and patient activation for older adults with complex needs in Singapore. *Published in BMC Geriatrics in July 2021. Click [here](#) to view the published article online.*

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KEY FINDINGS

1. Patients enrolled in the PCMH model of care reported an overall improvement in their fulfilment of needs, which included aspects on control, autonomy, self-awareness and pleasure.
2. A higher percentage of older persons in the PCMH felt that they had improved knowledge, skills and confidence in the management of their health conditions and ability to self-care.
3. Quality of life and self-perceived health remained stable.

IMPLICATIONS AND SIGNIFICANCE OF FINDINGS

1. Patient-centred care models like the PCMH could be beneficial to older patients' perception on satisfaction of needs and ability to manage and care for their health in the community.
2. Integrated primary care clinic and home-based care management services enable comprehensive assessment of health and social care needs, involve patients in making decisions about their care, and develop individualised care plans.
3. With the ageing of the population, there would be increasing numbers of older adults with multiple medical conditions, mental health needs and social care needs. An integrated care model like the PCMH could benefit older adults with complex needs.
4. Future research could establish the effectiveness of the PCMH for a larger number of older persons and longer duration to understand the longer-term costs and benefits, challenges and impact.

BACKGROUND

The ageing population has led to an increase in older persons requiring care for a complex combination of physical, psychological and social care needs. The PCMH is a relatively new model of care that has been recommended at primary care settings in the United States and Australia for patient-centered care. Healthcare that is patient-centered focuses on the person, instead of their medical conditions only.

The model of PCMH in Singapore included an integrated primary care and care management, which provided comprehensive assessment of health and social care needs of patients. This new care model facilitated healthcare professionals to build trust and relationships with patients, involve them in making decisions about their health, and develop personalised care plans for them.

FOCUS OF PROJECT

The objective was to examine older adults' self-reported quality of life, satisfaction of needs, and ability to manage their own health. It was part of an evaluation of a PCMH pilot programme by Tsao Foundation in Singapore that started in November 2016. The PCMH consisted of clinic services by doctors and nurses, and home-based services by social workers and nurses. Findings added to the new ways of organising the delivery of primary healthcare, and potentially formulate health policies for older adults who require care for a complex combination of physical conditions, mental health conditions and social needs in the community.

PARTICIPANTS

Participants were a subset of patients enrolled in the PCMH. They were recruited from 1 November 2017 to 30 April 2019. Participants had to be at least 40 years old, had physical, psychological and social care needs, and consented to be in the study. This study had 165 participants aged 77 years on average.

STUDY DESIGN

It was a before-after (pre-post) study at Tsao Foundation's Integrated PCMH clinic in Whampoa, Singapore. Participants completed surveys with trained interviewers when they enrolled in the PCMH, and at 3 months and 6 months after enrolment. There was no control group.

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