

Unity Health Toronto

Quality Improvement Plan

2019-20



Overview

Unity Health Toronto is the new name for the organization that was formed when Providence Healthcare, St. Joseph's Health Centre and St. Michael's Hospital came together in August 2017. Our organization serves patients, residents and clients across the full spectrum of care, spanning primary care, secondary community care, tertiary and quaternary care services to post-acute through rehabilitation, palliative care and long-term care. Our academic mission is demonstrated in our world-class research and education programs.

High quality care is best shaped by understanding the experiences and wisdom of patients, residents, families, caregivers and our community. This year we are putting quality into action by focusing on key areas to make that care and experience even better with a particular attention to timely and efficient transitions, service excellence and safe and effective care. These areas are grounded in broader goals that reflect a health system that is timely, efficient, effective, safe, patient-centred, equitable, integrated and supportive of provider wellness.

Our goals and improvement plans, co-developed by staff and advisors, include:

- making our workplaces safer for everyone by increasing awareness of violence
- decreasing the time patients wait in the emergency department to be admitted to a room
- making sure patients have the information they need when they leave our sites so they can stay healthy and well
- preventing patients and residents from falling and getting hurt and residents from developing pressure injuries
- improving the communication between residents and staff for a better resident experience in our long-term care home

Our greatest QI achievements from the past year

Every day across our hospitals, long-term care home and community sites, you can witness quality care and quality improvement in action. Some of these initiatives are small scale and designed to make an impact at a unit or service level, while others are far reaching and include engaging with our partners across care settings to improve large system-level issues. Below are examples from each of our sites about a specific quality improvement initiative from the last year that we consider a bright spot.

Providence

288 residents call the Cardinal Ambrozic Houses of Providence their home. The people down the hall are their neighbours, their activity partners, their friends. But in a long-term care environment, it's inevitable that people will not be there forever and the loss of a resident can have a significant impact on other residents and health-care providers.

In 2018, the Houses started a new program called "We Remember" as a way to recognize residents and honour the friends they leave behind. When a resident passes, a ceremony is held in their room as an opportunity for residents and staff to gather with Spiritual Care and share memories of the individual. For some, it's closure. For others, it just means they're not wondering why they don't see the person anymore. For everyone, it's more person-centred, enhancing the experience of living and working in a long-term care home.

St. Joseph's

Patients, especially those who are older, malnourished or immuno-compromised, are at risk for developing pressure injuries on bony areas of their skin when they're lying in a hospital bed with minimal movement. This is an issue experienced across acute care and long-term care facilities everywhere.

Preventing and reducing pressure injuries has been a focus at St. Joseph's and the 4L Medicine team has been leading the charge. The team started a "pressure injury champion" program that trained staff on how to identify early risks and work to prevent them. They hold daily safety huddles to keep the issue top of mind and they regularly check every single pressure injury on the unit. When the program started, the team set a goal to reach 30 consecutive days without a new pressure injury developing or an existing injury worsening and kept track by posting the total days they'd achieved on a board in the unit. In 2018, they surpassed their goal, reaching 55 days.

This success is now helping patients and residents across Unity Health Toronto – the strategies are being shared to ensure we keep everyone we care for as safe and healthy as possible.

St. Michael's

Keeping hands clean is one of the most important things health-care providers can do to help protect patients from hospital-acquired infections. Hands are the vehicle most likely to spread bacteria and germs which is especially important in a health-care setting where providers are moving between patients and expected to clean their hands hundreds of times in a day; if they miss an opportunity, the risk is higher that they may spread something.

As part of our continuing hand hygiene improvement efforts, St. Michael's implemented a pilot project to assess an automated hand hygiene monitoring system (SmartPump) on eight inpatient units. The system tracks each time a hand hygiene dispenser on a unit is activated and, by integrating data on the unit's number of patients, staff, visitors, etc., it converts the total number of dispensing events into an accurate estimate of overall hand hygiene compliance. Reports can be generated and are posted on participating units to show results.

To establish a baseline, all units were monitored for three to six months without feedback. During this time, hand hygiene compliance remained flat and did not show any change. Once feedback from SmartPump started, units began to show improvement. Our top unit went from 22% to 90% and has been sustaining hand hygiene compliance at greater than 80% for many months. Improvement has occurred on all units and overall hand hygiene compliance on these units has tripled (from 18% in the first quarter of the study to 56% in the current quarter to date).

This pilot has been so successful that it's soon to launch at St. Joseph's.

Patient/client/resident partnering and relations

We believe that the best improvement opportunities are those where there is a partnership between care providers and our patients, residents and family members. When we work together to improve care, real and impactful change happens.

At Unity Health Toronto we believe every patient, client, resident, caregiver and family deserves the best possible experience when engaging with us. We know that being a truly person-centred organization requires us to co-develop new ways of working together, engaging patients in their care decisions and beyond. That includes providing the best information so that patients and residents can make informed decisions about their own health and supporting them in their care choices. That also means having patients and family members working together with us across the organization from being members of our committees and working with us on projects – ensuring that the patient voice is a perspective in everything we do. In fact, partnering more broadly with our patients, residents and their families was one of our quality improvement goals in 2018/19 and, as a result, we saw more initiatives, projects and committees than ever with patient and family advisors at the table. Patient and family advisors supported everything from helping hire three of our new executive team members, to making information more accessible for patients, to leading the charge on creating a new patient declaration of values for Unity Health Toronto.

This year, patient and family advisors also helped shape our quality priorities. Together with staff and physicians, they brainstormed change ideas that would have the greatest impact.

Workplace violence prevention

Violence in the workplace has a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of health-care providers. At Unity Health Toronto, we have created a multiyear plan to significantly reduce the incidence and impact of violence: through prevention programs and support for our people who experience violence. This includes providing education to our patients and visitors about ways we can work together to keep everyone safe and encouraging our teams to report all incidents so that we can investigate causes and provide follow up. Better reporting allows us to understand the full scope of the issue and work to prevent it.

This was one of our quality priorities last year and will be again this year. It is an ongoing challenge in health care and one of our biggest quality focuses – our people need to feel safe in order to provide the best care.

This work is building on the successes of St. Joseph's and the Joint Centres for Transformative Healthcare Innovation, a partnership between seven large community hospitals who together implemented a common approach to workplace violence risk identification and care planning.

Contact Information

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Sign-off

We have reviewed and approved Unity Health Toronto's 2019-20 Quality Improvement Plan and are pleased to submit to Health Quality Ontario. Thank you to the staff, physicians, learners, volunteers, patients, residents and families who contributed their expertise and energy to the development of this plan. Together, we can provide the best possible experience for our patients, residents and families.



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