



Hub and Spoke Alzheimer's Disease: Current Efforts

EARLY DIAGNOSIS AND PRIMARY CARE INTEGRATION

- Development of a SmartPhrase tool for use with any electronic medical record and includes diagnostics that can be drawn in from the chart, dropdown menus for history taking, medication choices, referral choices and resources for patient and family.
- Several hospitals are currently using this tool.
- The hub and spoke group is working to integrate this tool in primary care practices across the state through a half-day continuing medical education program rollout.

NURSE EDUCATION, PRACTICE, QUALITY AND RETENTION INTERPROFESSIONAL COLLABORATIVE PRACTICE PROGRAM GRANT APPLICATION

HRSA grant application submitted last week to improve the skills and raise the interest of the health care students and workforce to integrate evidence-based services into care plan models for older adults. The application is requesting funding to:

- Provide students immersive interprofessional educational experience about complex older adult behavioral healthcare.
- Enhance healthcare provider team knowledge of interprofessional collaborative practice (IPCP) regarding best practices for Alzheimer's Disease and other Related Dementias (ADRD) diagnosis and care.
- Improve retention of advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) working in rural nursing homes and correctional facilities by facilitating networking and access to mental health resources.

S.300 May Impede Current Efforts

ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE; ASSESSMENT AND STATE PLAN

The report proposed is both a comprehensive inventory as well as a strategic plan. This sort of long-term planning is important and requires significant resources. Because the hub and spoke group is currently implementing a tool for early diagnosis and resource referral and other training and care coordination efforts, the assessment and state plan should have the assistance of a consultant or dedicated state staff to work on this proposed assessment and state plan.

CONTINUING EDUCATION ASSESSMENT; REPORT

The hub and spoke group is currently trying to develop a continuing medical education program to introduce and integrate its SmartPhrase tool for early diagnosis and resource referral in practices throughout Vermont. Taking three people to focus on a report rather than developing an actual continuing medical education program would delay efforts to implement the early diagnosis and resource referral tool.



DISCLOSURE OF DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT OPTIONS

- The SmartPhrase tool that the hub and spoke group is currently promoting includes resources for family members.
- It is unclear how requiring providers to disclose a diagnosis after consent differs from current practice.
- The phrase “implied consent” creates unneeded ambiguity for the health care provider in the context of health information disclosure.

HOSPITAL OPERATION PLAN

The requirement of having hospitals individually develop an operational plan takes away resources from implementing statewide efforts, such as the SmartPhrase tool for early diagnosis and resource referral. It also has the potential to create different approaches hospital by hospital, when the hub and spoke group is looking to standardize early diagnosis and resource referral.

Conclusion

VAHHS supports the hub and spoke group’s efforts on Alzheimer’s disease and related disorders. The early diagnosis and resource referral tool is ready for implementation statewide and a bunch of other promising initiatives are in the works. This legislation, which focuses more on planning rather than implementation, seems like a step back instead of a step forward.