

Patient Navigator Coordination of Transitions for Older Adults with Fractures: Family Caregiver Experiences

N Hanson 1; L Skerry 1; K O'Keefe 1; T Freeze 1; C Nguyen 1; R Somal 1; K Faig 1; P Jarrett 1,2

1. Research Services, Horizon Health Network, Saint John, NB; 2. Dalhousie Medicine New Brunswick, Saint John, NB

Natasha.Hanson@HorizonNB.ca

Patient Navigators were supportive and helpful with care.

Table 1. Descriptives for caregiver interview participants by group.

	Standard of Care (n = 7)	Patient Navigator (n = 8)
Age	61.1 (11.4)	64.4 (6.6)
Gender		
Female	6	8
Male	1	0
Education		
≤High School	2	2
>High School	5	6
Relationship to Patient		
Adult Child	6	4
Family Member	0	2
Friend	0	1
Spouse/Partner	1	1

Note: Age is reported as Mean (Standard Deviation).

INTRODUCTION

- Fall-related injuries such as fractures are on the rise among older adults in New Brunswick, Canada and can lead to hospitalization and adverse health effects. Moreover, transitions from acute care can be complicated and overwhelming for patients and their families.
- Patient navigators may facilitate transitional care and discharge as well as provide patients and families with education and follow-up.

OBJECTIVE

- To investigate the impact of patient navigators working alongside the healthcare team on patient and family experiences, as compared to the usual standard of care, for adults aged 65 and older admitted with a fracture to an Orthopedic Unit at one hospital in New Brunswick, Canada.

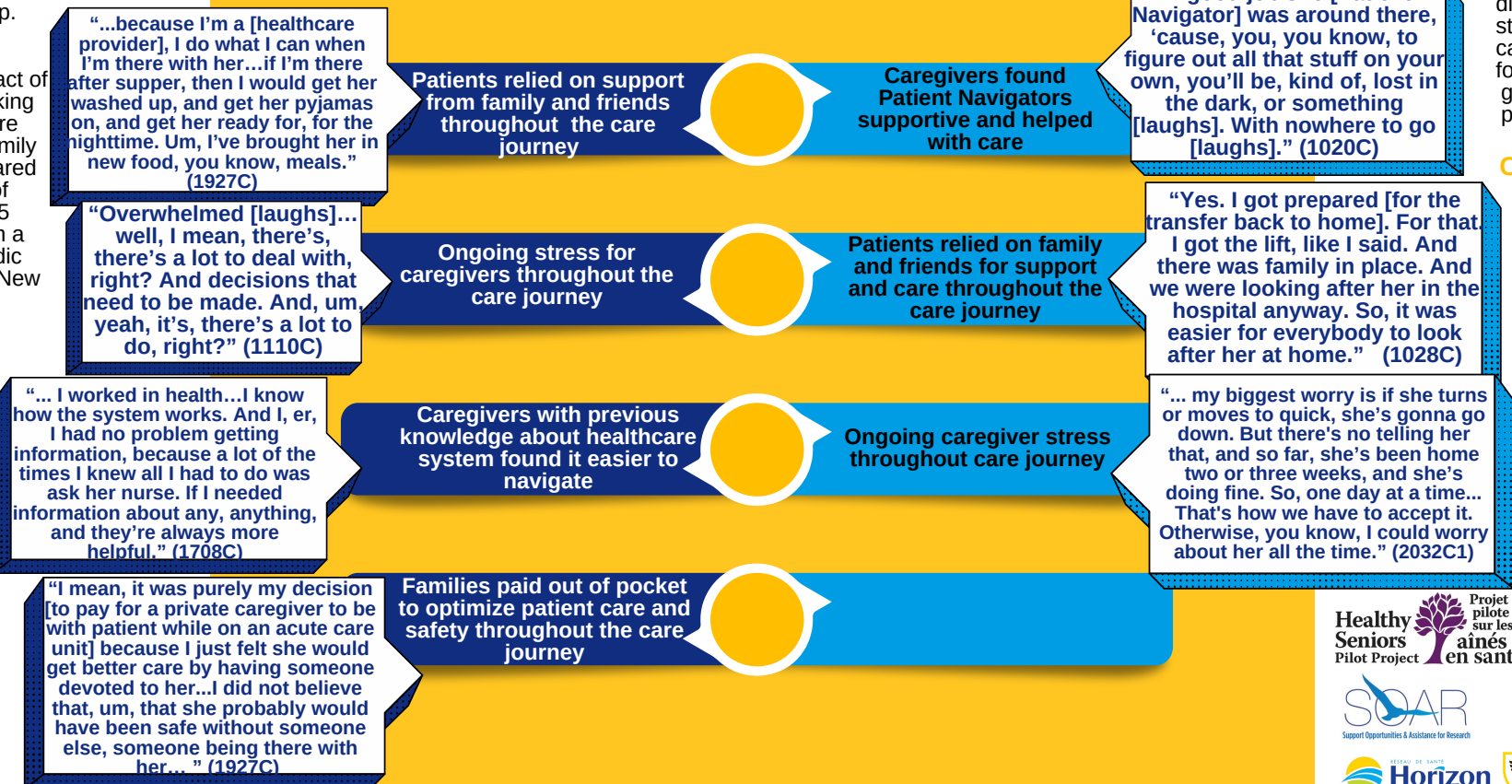
METHODS

- Concurrent embedded mixed methods design, in which the randomized control trial had an embedded qualitative component
- Interpretive description approach used on presented family caregiver qualitative component
- Semi-structured interviews were conducted and thematically analyzed.

FAMILY CAREGIVER THEMES

Standard of Care (n=7)

Patient Navigator (n=8)



"...because I'm a [healthcare provider], I do what I can when I'm there with her...if I'm there after supper, then I would get her washed up, and get her pyjamas on, and get her ready for, for the nighttime. Um, I've brought her in new food, you know, meals." (1927C)

Patients relied on support from family and friends throughout the care journey

Caregivers found Patient Navigators supportive and helped with care

"...good job she [Patient Navigator] was around there, 'cause, you, you know, to figure out all that stuff on your own, you'll be, kind of, lost in the dark, or something [laughs]. With nowhere to go [laughs]." (1020C)

"Overwhelmed [laughs]... well, I mean, there's, there's a lot to deal with, right? And decisions that need to be made. And, um, yeah, it's, there's a lot to do, right?" (1110C)

Ongoing stress for caregivers throughout the care journey

Patients relied on family and friends for support and care throughout the care journey

"Yes. I got prepared [for the transfer back to home]. For that I got the lift, like I said. And there was family in place. And we were looking after her in the hospital anyway. So, it was easier for everybody to look after her at home." (1028C)

"... I worked in health...I know how the system works. And I, er, I had no problem getting information, because a lot of the times I knew all I had to do was ask her nurse. If I needed information about any, anything, and they're always more helpful." (1708C)

Caregivers with previous knowledge about healthcare system found it easier to navigate

Ongoing caregiver stress throughout care journey

"... my biggest worry is if she turns or moves to quick, she's gonna go down. But there's no telling her that, and so far, she's been home two or three weeks, and she's doing fine. So, one day at a time... That's how we have to accept it. Otherwise, you know, I could worry about her all the time." (2032C1)

"I mean, it was purely my decision [to pay for a private caregiver to be with patient while on an acute care unit] because I just felt she would get better care by having someone devoted to her...I did not believe that, um, that she probably would have been safe without someone else, someone being there with her..." (1927C)

Families paid out of pocket to optimize patient care and safety throughout the care journey

DISCUSSION

- Patient Navigators were shown to be supportive and helpful with care.
- Support from patient navigators may be helpful in reducing caregiver burden, as the standard of care group relied further on family and friends.

- While both groups discussed the ongoing stress felt throughout the care journey of the patient, for the patient navigator group this topic was less prevalent.

CONCLUSIONS

- This study provides a better understanding of the positive impacts a patient navigator can have on older adult inpatient care and transitions in care.

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