



1st National Nursing Informatics Conference 2005 Proceedings

Nurses & Informatics: Transforming Healthcare

Sept 14 – 16th, 2005 – University of Toronto, Ontario

CONCURRENT SESSIONS THEME 1: Informatics Innovations in Nursing Practice

**Value-Added Community Outreach:
Outcomes of a Telerehabilitation Service**

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ABSTRACT

The Rehabilitation Centre (TRC) specializes in the physical rehabilitation of adults who have experienced a disabling physical illness or injury. All out-patient clinic consultation requests are triaged in order to direct the patient to the most appropriate venue. This level of patient service has been newly reconfigured. Stronger political, social and financial influences, as well as new clinical practice requirements, have required us to redesign the service in order to respond to the demand for greater flexibility in patient care delivery.

In 2003, TRC officially joined with The Ottawa Hospital (TOH). Membership to the Steering Committee for Telehealth Services at TOH, has linked the Center to the services and expertise of the CareConnect Network. They are one of three Telehealth networks in the province of Ontario. On their recommendation, we have developed and approved a clinical protocol for Telehealth practice. We provide them with monthly Activity Reports and participate in strategic planning meetings. TRC officially began accepting telehealth referrals in September of 2004. The interdisciplinary approach is essential to our setting and this standard is expected in telehealth practice. Psychiatry, nursing, physiotherapy, occupational therapy and speech pathology participate in the telehealth sessions. When possible, members of the patient's community health care team are invited to participate. Communication of therapeutic goals and treatment approaches can be discussed immediately. Data from 6 months of telehealth sessions will be tabulated and presented, including patient and clinician feedback. Issues of Best Practice, outcome measurement and areas for further improvement will also be presented.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Christine Rochefort RN, BscN, CRRN is a graduate of the University of Ottawa; School of Nursing. She is certified in the specialty practice of rehabilitation nursing (USA). She is an employee of 21 years at The Rehabilitation Centre-The Ottawa Hospital. Presently, she is the Service Nurse Clinician for the Traumatic Brain Injury out-patient clinic, and as well the Telehealth coordinator for rehabilitation services at the Ottawa Hospital. She has also taught at the University of Ottawa School of Nursing. She is interested in the collection of data regarding nursing workload associated with the triage of consultation requests to the specialty out-patient clinics available at the Center.