

A Novel Initiative at University Health Network: Extended Role Physiotherapists in an Outpatient Orthogeriatric Setting

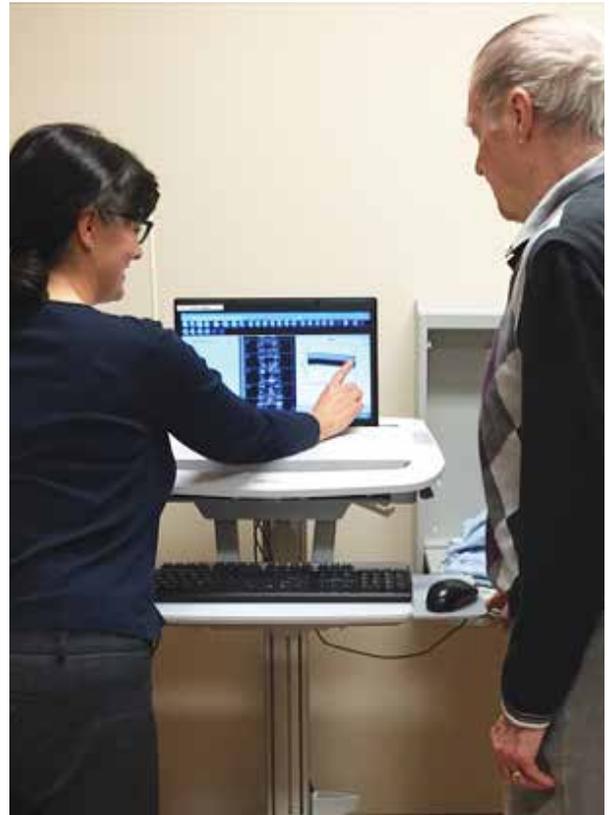
By Leslie Soever, BScPT, MSc, ACPAC and Mandy McGlynn, BScPT, MSc, ACPAC

Background

In 2006, Toronto Rehab (TR) partnered with Toronto Western Hospital to lead system change and address gaps in care delivery for patients with hip fractures. This new model of care for patients with hip fractures is known as Fractured Hip Rapid Assessment and Treatment (FHRAT). This system-change initiative has measurably improved care for patients with hip fractures, including patients with complex issues such as dementia. In the early stages, efforts focused on moving patients more efficiently from acute care to inpatient rehab.

More recently, at TR we are working to better meet the needs of patients with hip fractures following discharge from inpatient rehab.

There are multiple competing priorities related to patients needing access to our outpatient rehab services and specialty medical clinics. As such, there are substantial waitlists for these services. Many patients with hip fractures are elderly and present with a number of co-morbidities and functional decline. In addition, typically these patients have complex health challenges including pain, osteoporosis, dementia, polypharmacy and arthritis. Because of this complexity, these patients frequently require specialized medical follow up after their inpatient rehab stay and further rehab as outpatients. Many have never been diagnosed with osteoporosis until this catastrophic event and therefore need ongoing osteoporosis assessment and management and falls prevention education and management. Many also require monitoring and follow up due to cognitive impairment (either dementia or post-operative delirium). However, despite these identified needs, most patients do not receive any of this specialized follow-up care. In fact, between April 2014 and February 2015, only 8% of the 197 patients with hip fractures discharged from inpatient rehab at TR, were seen by a physiatrist in follow up.



Leslie Soever educating patient on fracture risk based on DEXA scan results

Physiotherapists in Extended Roles

This is where we come in. With our Advanced Clinician Practitioner in Arthritis Care (ACPAC) training, we practise in extended roles to address this health service delivery gap in an outpatient clinic setting. We are also fortunate to have a very supportive and innovation-minded leadership team (critical to successful implementation of such roles). All patients occupying inpatient rehabilitation beds at TR who have sustained a hip fracture, are offered outpatient follow-up appointments with one of us. The purpose of the follow-up visits with us is orthogeriatric in nature and includes: pain management; osteoporosis assessment and management; falls prevention and management; and cognitive and functional assessment and management. Through medical directives, x-rays, dual energy x-ray absorptiometry scans, and laboratory tests are ordered, as indicated.

The time points of follow-up are nine weeks post-surgery (approximately one month post-inpatient rehabilitation stay), then six months, one year and two years. In addition, patients have the option to be followed more frequently on an as needed basis and have the option for telephone follow-up to address immediate and/or urgent concerns or questions.



Mandy McGlynn educating patient on hip x-ray

We work closely with our physician colleagues to collaborate and coordinate referrals as necessary to internists, physiatrists, rheumatologists, geriatricians and orthopaedic surgeons.

What is Next?

An extensive evaluation plan of this exciting initiative is underway. We are evaluating this initiative from a number of different perspectives including system-, patient- and stakeholder-level outcomes such as readmission, access to care, and patient and family experience. Stay tuned for the results! *



LESLIE SOEVER

Leslie is a graduate of the University of Toronto for both her undergraduate physiotherapy degree and her Master of Science degree (Institute for Medical Science and the Collaborative Program in Bioethics); and the ACPAC Program

in 2008. One of Leslie's clinical areas of interest has always been hip fracture; her Master's thesis involved a qualitative study addressing what is important to elderly females who sustain a hip fracture. Currently, Leslie is working in a combined clinical extended role/leadership position, as a Physiotherapy Practitioner and Senior Professional Practice Leader.



MANDY McGLYNN

Mandy McGlynn graduated from the University of Toronto Physical Therapy Program in 1994 and she completed her Master of Science degree in the Department of Rehabilitation Sciences in 2005.

Most recently she did the Advanced Clinician Practitioner in Arthritis Care (ACPAC) Program, graduating in 2014. Currently she is working at Toronto Rehab in a combined clinical extended role/leadership position as a Physiotherapy Practitioner and Advanced Practice Leader.

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