Nutrition Care Through the Healthcare Journey

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Abstract

The Sinai Health System comprises of two hospitals including Bridgepoint Active Healthcare, a rehabilitation and complex care hospital. Here, I worked as a dietetic student in inpatient medical rehab, transitional care, renal (kidney) and palliative care units for 8-weeks. In addition, I was placed at Bridgepoint Family Health Team (FHT) for 4-weeks, where I worked with the Diabetes Education Program (DEP) team, which consisted of a registered dietitian and advanced practice nurse. At the hospital, we supported patients to adequately meet their nutrition needs throughout rehabilitation and improve their overall nutritional status for a smooth transition back into community after discharge. By providing nutritional support and nutrition education, patients may be better equipped to take care of their health leading to better possible health outcomes, a reduced number of future hospital visits and therefore a reduced burden on the healthcare system. Additionally, we helped complex care patients to maintain their nutritional status during their long-term stays. Of particular mention are patients in the renal unit living with diabetes as it connected to my FHT rotation. At the FHT, the DEPT team saw adults at risk, recently diagnosed or living with diabetes to help prevent or manage their condition through diet counselling, education and encouraging healthy behaviours. The goal was to help prevent further complications associated with poorly managed diabetes, such as renal disease. This, represents the point of intersection of clinical practice and public health, where the bridge between preventative and curative healthcare can be observed. Ultimately, nutrition care throughout the various stages of the healthcare journey is important to public health and its mission - to decrease the prevalence of chronic disease, such as diabetes, and maintain and promote healthier communities through effective healthcare.