Piloting Patient Navigation for People with Dementia, their Caregivers, and Members of the Care Team

Why is this project important?

- The number of Canadians diagnosed with dementia is increasing each year, but dementia care remains difficult to navigate.
- Patient navigation (PN) is a model that proactively guides and supports patients through the healthcare system, matching patients' needs to appropriate resources.

What did we do?

- We piloted and evaluated a bilingual PN program in NB for people with dementia, their caregivers/care partners, and the care team.
- This program ran for 12 months. Across sites, 150 participants (PWD and caregiver dyads) took part in the study.
- Surveys showed that 84% of respondents were satisfied with the PN program, 75% reported gaining more knowledge about available services, and 74% said they experienced improved access.
- Interviews emphasized the navigators' role in accessing services, providing information, and offering emotional support. Some suggested starting the program earlier in the care process, while others still faced systemic barriers despite the navigator's assistance.
- Facilitators to implementation included having appropriately trained staff and having connections within the health and social systems. Barriers included a compressed timeline and a lack of accessible resources for participants.

How will this help?

- These study results suggest that PN, embedded in existing primary care clinics/health centers, is beneficial for PWD and their caregivers/care partners.

Who can I contact?

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