



Transitions from Hospital to Home: Patient and Caregiver Brainstorming

Goals

- *To better understand the experience of transitioning from hospital to home.*
- *To understand patient and caregiver priorities for how they could be better supported when they leave hospital for home.*

Patients and caregivers tell us that the journey home after hospital admission is tough. Poor transitions increase the risk of complications.

Together with Dr. Tara Kiran at St. Michael’s Hospital, we want to hear from patients and caregivers about their experience transitioning from hospital to home.

Feedback will inform health care quality initiatives across Ontario about how to better support patients as they recover at home after a hospital stay.

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What is this guide for?

This guide is for YOU! It is designed to help you lead a conversation in your community about the experience of leaving hospital and recovering at home.

The input from your community will help to inform a number of different projects to improve transitions from hospital to home, led by Health Quality Ontario and Dr. Tara Kiran of St. Michael's Hospital.

Who are we?

Health Quality Ontario is a government agency and our mandate is to improve health care quality in Ontario. You can learn more about us at www.hqontario.ca.

Our commitment to you

Thank you for participating in this project. We could not do it without your help. In return, we commit to:

- Providing you with information and supports to help you lead the conversation within your community or group
- Sharing back with you what we hear from around Ontario, so that you can use that information if you are also working to improve the transition from hospital to home
- Welcoming your feedback on how we could improve our engagement activities

What is the transitions project all about?

- We know transitions are hard on patients and their loved ones, and poor transitions can lead to complications. This creates safety risks for patients and can put an added strain on our health system.
- We are reaching out across Ontario to hear from patients and their loved ones about what would improve the transition from hospital to recovering at home.
- The feedback collected will help to:
 - Create a common standardized approach to discharging patients, transferring information and following up with support.
 - Develop ways to measure the success and effectiveness of a patient's transition from hospital to home.
 - Share knowledge about what patients and caregivers value most at this point in their journey, and if different groups of patients have different needs or preferences during transitions.

We are using an approach called *Concept Mapping* to collect and analyze the experiences of patients, caregivers, and families concerning their experiences of transition from hospital to home.

What is concept mapping?

- Concept Mapping is a structured, systematic approach to collecting and analyzing ideas from diverse groups of people.
- Concept Mapping involves three phases of engagement:
 - 1) Brainstorming statements in response to a focused question.
 - 2) Sorting and rating the list of brainstormed statements.
 - 3) Interpretation, where participants discuss and interpret pictures called “concept maps” that are created out of the brainstormed statements.

This guide is on how to lead a BRAINSTORMING session (Phase 1 of the Concept Mapping process).

Facilitating a Group Brainstorming Session

Participants: Patients or caregivers who have experienced a transition from hospital to home in the last three years.

Recruitment: You can visit www.hqontario.ca/transitions for supporting documents provided by Health Quality Ontario to post in your organization’s space and to email to clients, patients, caregivers and care providers you work with.

Group size: Ideally 5-15 participants per facilitator

Time: 45-60 minutes

Facilitator’s role

Gathering Materials and Preparing for the session

- Markers, pens or pencils (minimum 1 per person)
- One flipchart per group
- One masking tape roll per group
- Sheets of blank paper (at least 3 per person)
- Demographic survey handouts (1 per participant)
- Set-up a safe and welcoming space
- In advance of the session, write the question on a big sheet of paper on the wall.

Introducing the Activity:

- Introduce yourself and your role.
- Introduce the transitions project and how the ideas generated in this brainstorming session will inform a province-wide initiative to improve care transitions between hospital and home, and any other initiatives you are connected with.
- Briefly explain what brainstorming as well as the phases of the project. Feel free to use the information on these PowerPoint slides **[link to slides]**.
- Ask participants to complete the demographic surveys (Appendix A).

- If appropriate for your group, set some ground rules for brainstorming session

- Summarize main themes identified.
- Do you have anything else to add about what we have discussed today?
- Ask people if they are interested in continuing to participate in the project. Interested participants will be informed of next steps.

Brainstorming activity

We'd like to ask you to brainstorm—based on your experience—potential solutions or ideas on how to improve the patient transition experience out of hospital. What worked well and what didn't?

Question: When leaving the hospital for home, some things that affected the experience were: _____

- Ask participants to first take some time to think about their experiences and write down their ideas on sheets of paper provided (if literacy is not an issue).
- Ask participants to share ideas and allow participants to build on each other's ideas.
- Encourage participants to be as specific as possible (see brainstorming examples on the next page).
- Record ideas on flip chart, in as close to their own wording as possible.

Reflections:

Brainstorming examples:

It is important for participants to be specific in their answers so that later, their ideas can be sorted into categories which will be used to write actionable standards for health care providers.

Sample Ground Rules

- Reiterate the purpose of the session i.e. to brainstorm ideas.
- One person at a time should be speaking
- Keep an open mind, commit to contributing, considering the views and experiences of others, build on others' ideas.
- Focus on brainstorming instead of trying to convince others of your point of view.
- No right or wrong answers or bad ideas.
- Participants are free to talk to the facilitator, take a break, or leave the room if they feel upset or overwhelmed as a result of recalling their experiences.

Examples of specific and non-specific brainstorming ideas on transitions:

Not very specific: *Better communication.*

More specific: *Written materials that I could share with my family members about next steps in my recovery at home.*

Not very specific: *The doctor was nice.*

More specific: *The doctor looking after me in hospital took time to answer my questions before I was discharged.*

Not very specific: *I didn't have the support I needed.*

More specific: *I did not receive enough home care support to help me bathe and dress.*

Strategies for Success

- Set clear expectations with those participating—this is about gathering ideas rather than sharing stories.
- Set respectful ground rules.
- Plan what you will do if someone in your group becomes distressed by the conversation. (here is a good resource: http://trauma-informed.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Trauma-informed_Toolkit.pdf)
- Acknowledge and validate people's emotions.
- Don't be afraid of lulls in the conversation and silent moments.
- Ask people to clarify and expand on their own or others' ideas, to ensure you are capturing enough detail.

After the brainstorming

- Collect demographic information surveys.
- Enter information from brainstorming session into the excel sheet provided by HQO ([hyperlink](#))
- Send back to: transitions@hqontario.ca

What Happens Next?

In March we will be reviewing all the ideas generated through brainstorming across the province. If you and your community are interested, we may ask you to help with stages 2 and 3 of the concept mapping, which will take place in the spring.

THANK YOU!

Without you and your community we would not be able to do this important work!

Please feel free to contact us with any questions, and to let us know how we can support your conversation.

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