

Community Action and Resources Empowering Seniors (CARES)

Summary: *The Community Action and Resources Empowering Seniors (CARES) project is based on research evidence that frailty in senior adults with chronic health conditions can be delayed and potentially prevented outright. It partners primary care physicians in Fraser Health communities, ‘at risk’ pre-frail seniors and BC Self Management health coaches to prevent frailty.*

Fraser Health has partnered with Intrahealth Canada Limited and the Ridge Meadows Divisions of Family Practice to create, for the first time, an electronic comprehensive geriatric assessment form which is able to calculate a frailty index at point of service. The highly sensitive frailty index is able to calculate a reliable frailty score, which correlates more accurately to the senior’s clinical frailty scale rating. Knowing a patient’s frailty index score supports better informed primary care provider decisions in the management of their “at risk” seniors.

CARES assists with physician frailty education and adoption of the electronic format of the new measurement form into their electronic medical records. It is now available to any care provider using the Intrahealth Profile EMR system.

How the project works

The CARES model is depicted in Figure 1.



Primary care providers identify participants 65-85 years of age living at home or in an assisted living setting who have a Rockwood Clinical Frailty Score between 3 and 5 and who are vulnerable to decline into frailty. An electronic comprehensive geriatric health assessment capable of generating a frailty index is completed by the primary care team to assess the seniors’ frailty level.

The assessment findings are used to create a senior’s wellness plan to identify goals most important to the participant that will enhance their health and quality of life. A telephone-based health coach is paired with the senior to track their progress over four to six months. This coaching develops the senior’s self-management capacity while providing education and facilitating connections to resources in the community. The health coaches are provided free to seniors through Self-Management BC. At the end of six months, the assessment is repeated and compared to baseline.

In the preliminary study, there was a statistically significant decrease in the frailty index score of participating seniors equivalent to having two fewer health problems present or emerge within that six-month period.

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