

Focus on Community Care: The Esther model in Sweden

This flagship example from Sweden shows the powerful impact a simple coaching and collaborative approach can make to patient outcomes. Following its success in Jönköping, the model is now being implemented across care homes in Kent and developed nationally in Singapore. MedTech Europe's Community Care group calls for better patient care and more attention to the community setting. For more information visit www.medtecheurope.org

A simple and collaborative coaching approach

Developed in the late 1990s, the Esther Model was inspired by a real patient - 'Esther' - who arrived at her primary care provider experiencing shortness of breath and had to retell her story 36 times during her five-and-a-half-hour journey through the healthcare system.

Over the next two years, a team of HCPs in Jönköping County hospital conducted interviews and workshops with elderly patients with complex needs that involved multiple providers ('Esthers'). The results showed that patients felt the system was highly uncoordinated and a new approach was needed.

Esther model: Coaches drive frontline change

As a patient-centric approach, the Esther coaching model trains staff to always bear in mind the question "What is best for Esther?". Coaches help patients feel more confident and secure when receiving care at home. The ultimate goal is to improve care of elderly people with complex needs in an iterative and cooperative way.

Budget

€170k

Reduction in early admissions

30%

Reduction in re-admissions

16%

Esther coaches and patients

To become an Esther coach, nurses or health workers receive 8 day-long trainings. Their work is not paid and at least one Esther patient must be present during the trainings



Quarterly Esther cafes

Cross-sector patient experience meetings to share stories from new patients

Ongoing trainings

Inter-organisational education sessions on palliative care and nutrition to facilitate collaboration

Annual 'strategy day'

Team-building exercise bringing together coaches, doctors, nurses and Esther patients

Steering group

Group of community care chiefs of municipalities, hospitals and primary care providers

REFERENCES

1. Bradford Gray, Ulrika Winblad, Dana O. Sarnak (2016), <https://www.commonwealthfund.org/publications/case-study/2016/sep/swedens-esther-model-improving-care-elderly-patients-complex-needs>
2. Elisabetta Zanon (2015), <http://www.nhsconfed.org/blog/2015/01/is-sweden-s-model-of-integrated-care-a-beacon-of-light-for-the-nhs>

