



Heart Failure Provider Network

Chronic Heart Failure-QUERI Update

December 2008

Heart failure is associated with a high mortality, poor quality of life. Heart failure currently affects nearly 5 million Americans, and hospital admissions for this condition have increased six-fold in the United States since 1970 (from 80,000 per year to more than 500,000) due, in part, to an aging population. Moreover, heart failure is the number one reason for discharge for veterans treated within the VA health care system

The Chronic Heart Failure Quality Enhancement Research Initiative (CHF QUERI) utilizes the QUERI 6-step process to improve the quality of care and health outcomes of veterans with heart failure. Three goals have been identified for the CHF-QUERI: (1) increasing the use of life-prolonging treatment, (2) reducing hospitalizations through patient-centered care coordination, and (3) preventing and identifying unrecognized heart failure.

Heart Failure Provider Network

CHF-QUERI, with the help of Dr. Robert Jesse, Chief Consultant, Medical-Surgical Services and National Program Director for Cardiology, and VA's Patient Care Services, has initiated the Heart Failure Provider Network (HF Network)—a network of VA providers interested in improving heart failure care throughout the VA Health-care System. Currently, more than 450 providers (Chiefs of Cardiology, Chiefs of Medicine, Chiefs of Staff, clinicians, researchers, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, pharmacists and others) from 167 facilities are participating in this network.

Purpose

The HF Network is an important mechanism for the implementation of interventions that will improve the health and healthcare for veterans with heart failure. Major focus is on IHI's Save 5 Million Lives Campaign to improve early follow-up following hospital discharge for patients with heart failure. Through its collaboration, the HF Network focuses on the following activities:

- Share experiences with different heart failure care programs;
- Disseminate effective interventions, including implementation of quality improvement interventions;
- Collaborate on heart failure registries;
- Collaborate on research and implementation projects;
- Identify interested facilities for participation in multi-center health services research projects and other clinical trials; and

- Contribute to implementation research by understanding barriers and facilitators to implementation.

How Does the Heart Failure Provider Network Communicate?

Bi-monthly sessions are held with live meetings and conference calls. These sessions include announcements, discussion of new projects and trials, and description of one facility's heart failure program. In addition, there is an annual in-person meeting that is held at the Annual Meeting of the Heart Failure Society of America (for those Network members who are able to attend). The next meeting will be held in Boston, MA in September 2009 (www.hfsa.org). The HF Network also communicates via e-mail.

Website for Heart Failure Provider Network

The website for HF Network provides the schedule of sessions along with topics and slides presented at these sessions. It also includes information with slides about successful HF programs focusing on key topics as well as varying stages of HF program. There are also patient education materials, caregiver materials, N-HeFT, etc.

What are the Network's Plans for the Future?

- Creation of affiliated interest groups within heart failure, such as echocardiography; and

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- Implementation of interventions, such as reminders and nurse-based clinics.

Can Anyone Join?

There is no limit to the number of people who may join per facility. The HF Provider Network includes a mix of physicians, nurse practitioners, nurses, physician assistants, pharmacists, researchers and administrators.

How Do I Learn More?

For information about joining the Heart Failure Provider Network, contact:

Paul Heidenreich MD, MS
CHF-QUERI Research Coordinator
E-mail: paul.heidenreich@va.gov

Anju Sahay, PhD
CHF-QUERI Implementation Research Coordinator
E-mail: anju.sahay@va.gov

For information about CHF-QUERI, contact:

Theresa Marsh, BS
CHF QUERI Administrative Coordinator
Tel: (415) 221-4810 x3820
E-mail: theresa.marsh@va.gov

Web Resources

For more information about the QUERI program in general, and to link to all of the individual QUERI Centers, please go to www.queri.research.va.gov

CHF-QUERI Executive Committee

Each QUERI Executive Committee is co-chaired by a research expert and a clinician. The research coordinator for CHF-QUERI is **Paul Heidenreich, MD, MS**; the clinical coordinator is **Barry Massie, MD**. This Executive Committee includes other experts in the field of heart failure and implementation science, including: Anna Alt-White, RN, PhD; Anita Deswal, MD; Mark Dunlap, MD; Stephen Ezeji-Okoye, MD; Gregg Fonarow, MD; Jeffrey Frederick, BME; Elaine Furmaga, PharmD; Nancy Gardetto, RNP, MSN; Peter Groeneveld, MD, MPH; Robert L. Jesse, MD, PhD; Harlan Krumholz, MD, MPH; Ileana Piña, MD; Thomas Rector, PharmD, PhD; John Rumsfeld, MD, PhD; **Anju Sahay, PhD** (Implementation Research Coordinator); Martha Shively, RN, PhD; John Spertus, MD, MPH; and Douglas Wholey, PhD, MBA.