

Nurses Improving Care for Healthsystem Elders

# NICHE



## NICHE SOLUTION #14 • 2011

### USE OF THE BEST PRACTICE TEAM FOR THE CARE OF OLDER ADULTS

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**PROBLEM:** Care of older adult patients requires staff expertise and clinical practices that acknowledge their specialized needs.

**SOLUTION:** An inter-professional team guides the development, implementation and evaluation of quality initiatives designed to improve the outcomes and experiences of hospitalized older adults and their families.

**Problem Identified** Acute care nursing has traditionally focused on treating the acute problem that led to admission, rather than preventive, aging-sensitive interventions. The bedside nurse is typically challenged by a lack of educational and operational resources to prevent and manage “geriatric syndromes” such as infection, delirium, falls and adverse drug events.



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**Solution Formulated** A Best Practice Team for the Care of Older Adults was formed at St. Luke's Episcopal Hospital to respond to the needs of older adult patients. This inter-professional team focused on five areas:

- Improving the geriatric care knowledge base
- Reducing the prevalence of sepsis
- Reducing the incidence of delirium
- Reducing falls and fall-related injuries
- Improving medication reconciliation processes and decreasing the incidence of polypharmacy

**NICHE Role** NICHE provides extensive resources to help address the focus areas of the St. Luke's Episcopal Hospital's initiatives including core gerontologic curricula for the interdisciplinary team and evidence-based protocols and operational tools.

**Evaluation/Results** Some of the team accomplishments to date include:

- Implemented the 2008 Surviving Sepsis Campaign (SSC) Guidelines with improvements in cost and outcomes
- Developed a research study to test a delirium prevention bundle
- Secured grant monies to develop a Geriatric Resource Nurse Workshop
- Organized monthly geriatric education programs for licensed, unlicensed and medical staff
- Reduced Acetaminophen toxicity and improved prescribing practices for older adults
- Instituted a hospital-wide multidisciplinary educational initiative addressing the Beers criteria

### For more information

1. Donaldson, N., et. al. (2005). Leveraging nurse-related dashboard benchmarks to expedite performance improvement and document excellence. *J. Nurs. Adm.*, 35(4):163-72.
2. Fick, D.M., Cooper, J.W., Wade, W.E., Waller, J.L., Maclean, J.R., & Beers, M.H. (2003). Updating the Beers Criteria for potentially inappropriate medication use in older adults: Results of a US consensus panel of experts. *Archives of Internal Medicine*, 163(22), 2716-2724.
3. Inouye, S.K. (2006). Delirium in older persons. *NEJM*, 354, 1157-65.
4. Lau, D.T., Kasper, J.D., Potter, D.E., Lyles, A., & Bennett, R.G. (2005). Hospitalization and death associated with potentially inappropriate medication prescriptions among elderly nursing home residents. *Archives of Internal Medicine*, 165(1), 68-74.
5. National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. Division of Unintentional Injury Prevention. *Falls among older adults: an overview. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*. 2007. <http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/factsheets/adultfalls.htm>.
6. Wald, H.L., Epstein, A., Radcliff, T., & Kramer, A.M. (2008). Is Extended Urinary Catheter Use in Older Surgical Patients a Patient Safety Problem? *Infect. Control Hosp. Epidemiology* 29, 116-124.

### NICHE-related resources

1. ConsultgeriRN website. Available at: [http://consultgerim.org/topics/sleep/need\\_help\\_stat/](http://consultgerim.org/topics/sleep/need_help_stat/)
2. Geriatric Interdisciplinary Team (GITT) Program website [http://hartfordign.org/Resources/gitt\\_program/](http://hartfordign.org/Resources/gitt_program/)
3. The NICHE GRN Core Curriculum. <http://elearningcenter.nicheprogram.org/course/view.php?id=2>
4. The NICHE Introduction to Gerontology Curriculum. <http://elearningcenter.nicheprogram.org/course/view.php?id=5>
5. The NICHE Geriatric Patient Care Associate Curriculum. <http://elearningcenter.nicheprogram.org/course/view.php?id=28>

### About NICHE

NICHE is a national organization designed to help health care professionals in hospitals improve the care of older adults. NICHE hospitals seek to create an environment where older adult patients receive care that results in better outcomes. This climate of success encourages patients and their families to seek NICHE designated hospitals for their medical needs. The NICHE Network now numbers nearly 300 hospitals throughout North America.

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