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Abstract (Poster Presentation)

Title: Family Practice Patients' Perceptions of Team-Based Care

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Context: Since 2003, team-based care has become central to family practice in Alberta, Canada. Primary care teams are organized through Primary Care Networks (PCNs) and comprise family physicians working together with other health professionals to provide care to a population of patients. Research on patients' perspectives on team-based care within the PCN setting have been lacking.

Objective: To examine family practice patients' perceptions of team-based care.

Design: Cross-sectional, anonymous, waiting room surveys.

Setting: Five family medicine academic teaching clinics affiliated with PCNs in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Each clinic survey was conducted over a one week period between April 4 to July 22, 2016.

Participants: 44.3% (565/1275) of patients, ≥ 18 years of age, completed the survey; 61.6% were female; mean age was 52 years.

Outcome Measures: Access to team-based care, perceived benefits, satisfaction/confidence in team members, and patients' role on the team.

Results: 41.8% of patients reported receiving care from a team of PCN health professionals, primarily for chronic disease management and/or pharmacy consultation services. 60.1% felt that team-based care had improved their knowledge of their medical condition, access to care (46.0%), ability to provide self-care (43.8%), maintain their independence (40.1%), and improved their overall health (43.5%). Some patients felt team-based care had the effect of decreasing their visits to the emergency department (31.1%) and reducing hospitalizations (27.3%). 64.2% were somewhat/very satisfied with the care provided and 87.1% had much/great deal of trust in the team of health professionals. 41.1% felt they had an active role on the team and made decisions about their care together with health professionals.

Conclusion: Team-based care through PCNs has improved patients' knowledge and access to care, self-reported health outcomes, and avoided some emergency visits. The findings support the continued development of PCNs and team-based care in the practices of Alberta family physicians.