

Evaluating benefits is an important component of the connecting South West Ontario (cSWO) Program that helps to support and demonstrate the realization of health system benefits through the adoption of electronic health records (EHRs). By pursuing the measurement of organizational value (improvements in the efficiency of care delivery such as time-savings and redirected resources) and clinical value (patients undergo fewer unnecessary tests, patients have improved access to care), patients ultimately benefit from higher quality, better informed clinical decision-making.

The cSWO Analysis and Research program uses a research-based approach to identify areas of clinical best practice that are affected by the use of EHRs, and works collaboratively with clinicians to understand the value of EHRs. This formative evaluation process informs change management and adoption, and enables clinicians to use EHRs more effectively. This research does not include the use of any personal health information.

This document is one in a series of case studies which describe the clinical value of EHRs in different clinical settings and contexts, particularly with respect to clinical best practices. The work of the cSWO Analysis and Research program is ongoing; depending on the circumstance, these cases occasionally raise questions for further investigation, and clinicians are invited to participate in analysis and research to continue to develop these answers.

Value statement

The cSWO Regional Clinical Viewer, ClinicalConnect™, supports Mobile Crisis Rapid Response Team (MCRRT) members in accessing the right information, at the right time, in the right place, enabling the proper services to be allocated to patients in crisis.

Mobile Crisis Rapid Response Teams and their role in mental health care

The Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care announced phase two of Ontario's Comprehensive Mental Health and Addiction Strategy, *Open Minds, Healthy Minds* in 2014 to help achieve a province where everyone enjoys good mental health and well-being throughout their lifetime. This strategy includes a focus on using virtual applications to access services in order to ensure early identification of illness and intervention, resulting in Ontarians receiving the appropriate care, when they need it. Another pillar of the strategy involves providing the Right Care, at the Right Time, in the Right Place so that Ontarians experience better access to services and better interactions with the system¹. Timely access to the right care is crucial for patients experiencing mental illness because if left untreated, these patients may experience poor emotional well-being and social development, leaving them feeling socially isolated, stigmatized, and unable to optimize interpersonal relationships². In 2015-16, the Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant Local Health Integration Network (HNHB LHIN) funded the expansion of Mobile Crisis Rapid Response Team (MCRRT) models, a service that supports the phase two strategy. The MCRRT consists of an experienced mental health professional who responds first-hand to 911 calls along with a police officer in order to provide care and assess the patient while on-site. The team provides timely and appropriate crisis intervention to people presenting with mental illness, substance abuse, and behavioural disorders. This program aims to streamline access to mental health crisis supports, and helps reduce the burden of unnecessary referrals to the emergency department.

ClinicalConnect enables access to the right information, at the right time, in the right place

The Community Addiction and Mental Health Services (CAMHS) of Haldimand and Norfolk provide a variety of mental health programs to community members, including a Mobile Crisis Rapid Response Team. The MCRRT uses ClinicalConnect in order to better allocate services to patients in crisis. The MCRRT is able to access information through ClinicalConnect while on-site in order to better familiarize themselves with the patient, in order to provide the right

services to support the needs of the patient. This provides a more comprehensive understanding of the patient’s history in order to better serve the patient and expand the circle of care by making connections within the system.

The following diagrams depict a true scenario given by the organization showing how care is provided with and without, ClinicalConnect. This scenario demonstrates how ClinicalConnect enables the organization to provide “the Right Care, at the Right Time, in the Right Place” for patients with mental illness. It describes a young man known to police who is thought to have a diagnosis of schizophrenia. Without ClinicalConnect, the diagram shows that there is no change in his care provision, and he continues to experience the same problems. Gaining access to pertinent patient information through ClinicalConnect enables CAMHS to allocate the proper support to the patient in order to provide him with the right services in order to improve his well-being and reduce his likelihood of future challenging behaviour.

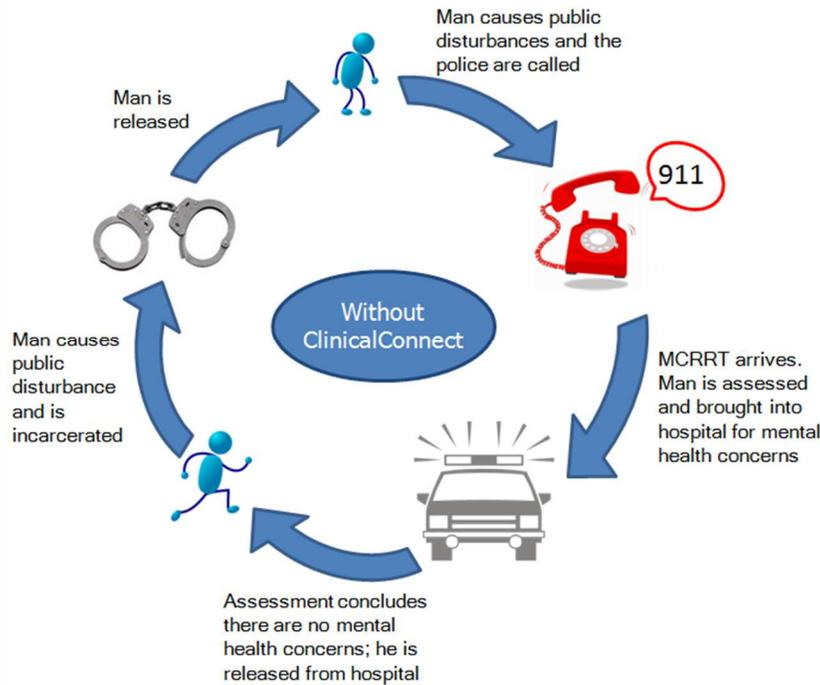


Figure 1. Patient cycle before ClinicalConnect use

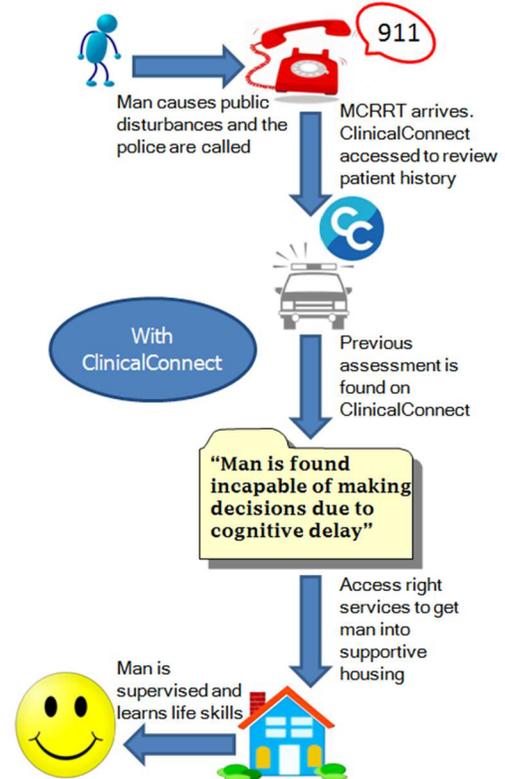


Figure 2. Patient pathway after ClinicalConnect use

Testimonial

“Once we had our key partners identified we set up a care conference and were able to get the ball rolling. Access to ClinicalConnect provides us with crucial information that we would otherwise be delayed or road blocked in obtaining”.

Katherine Studiman, Social Worker, Community Addiction and Mental Health Services of Haldimand and Norfolk

Questions

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Sources

¹Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. (2014). Expanded Mental Health and Addictions Strategy. Retrieved from: http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/public/programs/mentalhealth/expanded_strategy.aspx

²Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant LHIN. (2016). Strategic Health System Plan 2015-16 Year End Update. Retrieved from: <http://www.hnhblhin.on.ca/goalsandachievements/strategicdocuments/strategiehealthsystemplan.aspx>

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