Chronic diseases such as cancer, heart disease, and diabetes account for almost 70% of all deaths worldwide.

Integrated and comprehensive prevention and screening strategies are needed in primary care.

The BETTER WISE (Building on Existing Tools to Improve Cancer and Chronic Disease Prevention and Screening in Primary Care for Wellness of Cancer Survivors and Patients) Project a comprehensive approach that proactively addresses chronic disease prevention, screening and cancer survivorship, including screening for poverty and addressing lifestyle risks.

Prevention visits are provided by a healthcare professional, the Prevention Practitioner (PP).

Objectives

This qualitative evaluation is a sub-component of the BETTER WISE study and aims to identify key components of a BETTER WISE prevention visit based on patients’ and primary care providers’ perspectives.

Background

- Chronic diseases such as cancer, heart disease, and diabetes account for almost 70% of all deaths worldwide.
- Integrated and comprehensive prevention and screening strategies are needed in primary care.
- The BETTER WISE (Building on Existing Tools to Improve Cancer and Chronic Disease Prevention and Screening in Primary Care for Wellness of Cancer Survivors and Patients) Project a comprehensive approach that proactively addresses chronic disease prevention, screening and cancer survivorship, including screening for poverty and addressing lifestyle risks.
- Prevention visits are provided by a healthcare professional, the Prevention Practitioner (PP).

Methods

Setting

- Thirteen primary care settings (urban, rural, and remote) in Canada (6 in Alberta (AB), 4 in Ontario (ON), and 3 in Newfoundland and Labrador (NL))

Participants

- Primary care providers (N = 124; including all 13 PPs) participated in 14 focus groups and 19 key informant interviews. They were asked about implementation, uptake, impact, and sustainability of BETTER WISE.
- 356 feedback forms from 527 Patients (40-65 years of age) who attended a 1-hour visit with their PP. They were asked about demographic details, expectations from the visit, what they liked and what they would like to be different about the visit, and any other comments.

Analysis

- Qualitative data was analyzed using the constant comparison method informed by grounded theory.

Results

Four themes (Figure 1) were identified:

1) Creating a safe space and building trust

PPs provided time and a safe space for patients to share what was important to them including their concerns related to poverty, alcohol, and mental health that were often not shared with physicians.

2) Personalized health education

PPs used BETTER WISE tools to provide patients with a personalized overview of their health and eligible screening.

3) Non-judgmental empowerment of patients

Instead of directing patients what to do, PPs evoked patients’ preferences and helped them to set goals (if desired).

4) Integrating care for patients

PPs clarified information in patients’ charts and helped patients navigate resources within and outside of the primary care team.

Conclusion

Personalized, trusting, and non-judgmental relationships between primary care providers and patients as well as integrating care are key to successful chronic disease prevention and screening as exemplified by the BETTER WISE prevention visits.

Acknowledgement

Production of this poster has been made possible through a financial contribution from Alberta Innovates. The views expressed herein represent the views of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the project funders.

Figure 1. Themes and quotes for identified themes from patients and primary care providers on a BETTER WISE prevention visit.

Theme 1: Creating a safe space and building trust

“Great feeling when you can talk so openly about health issues, meds you are taking and no judgment” [Patient, female, AB]

“We uncover things that even their physician for years was not even aware of. It just speaks to how valuable it has to be to give the patient the time and to be heard and to explore what they feel is important to them” [PP, KI 012, ON]

“Kind of provides people with a reality check. So, a lot of people that I see, whether it’s for blood pressure medication, medication for diabetes or cholesterol, they really seem to be open to the idea of making those lifestyle changes to be able to stop or avoid taking medication” [PP, KI 015, ON]

Theme 2: Personalized health education

“[PP] helped me make realistic goals” [Patient, female, NL]

“Setting goals for my health with my prevention practitioner will go a long way for me. I feel like I’m doing this for myself but also have a coach motivating me in the background. (...) if I can maintain the goals I set for myself and confide in my practitioner to help me achieve good health, I will be very happy with myself” [Patient, ON, male]

“Traditionally, it’s been the physician mostly, but I think in the last few years it’s becoming more and more of a team work. And [BETTER WISE] is taking it a step further. And to me, it means less patients falling through the cracks” [Physician P6, Alberta]

Theme 3: Non-judgmental empowerment of patients

“A goal without a plan is just a wish”

Theme 4: Integrating care for patients

“[Physician P6, Alberta]”


Acknowledgement

Production of this poster has been made possible through a financial contribution from Alberta Innovates. The views expressed herein represent the views of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the project funders.