**HOPE –Selwyn Knowledge Exchange for Research on Ageing**

**Abstract**

**(Specific Gerontology Research Results)**

EVALUATION OF A PRIMARY HEALTH CARE GERONTOLOGY NURSE SPECIALIST. KING A, BOYD M, DAGLEY E, CALVERLEY R. SCHOOL OF NURSING, THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND

**Introduction**

Older people living in the community have ever more complex needs and are increasingly relying on General Practitioner (GP) practices.Innovative models of care are essential to keep pace with the changing population demands. This study describes a model of care developed to increase access to primary health care gerontology nurse specialist (GNS) care for high needs older people living in the community.

**Methods**

The method employed was a one group quasi-experimental pilot study with two phases. The innovative model will be described. The intervention entailed identifying high needs older people using the Brief Risk Identification for Geriatric Health Tool (BRIGHT) screen followed by a comprehensive geriatric assessment (CGA) performed by a primary health care gerontology nurse specialist (GNS). Phase 1 screened older people in three GP practices (predominantly NZ European population), phase 2 screened older people in one large GP practice with a more ethnically and socioeconomically diverse population. All practices were located in Auckland, New Zealand.

**Results**

Demographics of the older people and descriptive findings of the BRIGHT screens and CGAs are presented, highlighting differences between the divergent phase 1 and 2 populations. In phase 1, 416 older people were posted the BRIGHT screen compared with 328 in phase 2. The phase 1 sample revealed a high postal response rate of 70%, compared with 37% for phase 2. In phase 1, 15% of older people achieved a positive BRIGHT screen (score of 3 or greater) indicating increased risk for health or functional decline, which was comparable to the phase 2 total of 19% positive screens.

**Conclusions**

The primary health care GNS model delivered a proactive case finding andspecialist gerontology intervention for older people at high risk of functional or health decline. This type of innovation is crucial to meet the changing needs of the primary health care population.

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