Hospital Elder Life Program

# Goals

The Hospital Elder Life Program (HELP) is an innovative approach to improving hospital care for older patients, and was designed by Dr. Sharon Inouye and others at Yale University School of Medicine. The primary goals are:

* Preventing delirium
* Preventing physical and cognitive decline in high risk older adults throughout hospitalization
* Maximizing independence at discharge
* Assisting with the transition from hospital to home
* Preventing unplanned hospital readmissions

[www.hosptialelderlifeprogram.org](http://www.hosptialelderlifeprogram.org)

**Innovations in Health Human Resources**

As the first Canadian dissemination site, the HELP Program at Hamilton Health Sciences is able to provide enhanced patient care for older adults through the use of a small staff contingent and a large group of trained volunteers.

Volunteers perform targeted interventions to prevent iatrogenic events such as delirium.

* Daily Visitor – orientation, communication and social support
* Feeding Assistance – help and companionship during meals
* Therapeutic Activities – mental stimulation and socialization
* Early Mobilization – daily exercise and help with walking
* Non-Pharmacological Sleep Enhancement – relaxation and sleep promotion
* Vision/Hearing – adaptations and equipments

**HELP At Hamilton Health Sciences**

***First Year Outcomes***

* Very low delirium and functional decline rates
* Very high patient and family satisfaction
* New learning opportunities for students
  + Undergraduate and graduate placements

***Unexpected Secondary Gains***

* Large amounts of internal and external publicity
* Requests for information and site visits from around Canada
* Highly satisfied volunteers – 100% retention rate and low absenteeism
* Reduction of care burden (reduced call bell use reported by nurses)
* Program increases the profile of seniors and their unique health issues with staff
* Use of Montessori based activities for people with dementia in acute care

**Hamilton Health Sciences**

***Mission***

To provide excellent health care for the people and communities we serve and to advance health care through education and research.

***Vision***

Leaders in exemplary care, innovation and academic excellence.

***Values***

* Respect – we will treat every person with dignity and courtesy
* Caring – we will act with concern for the well being of every person
* Innovation – we will be creative and open to new ideas and opportunities
* Accountability – we will create value and accept responsibility for our activities

Senior’s Health Vision

*All seniors at Hamilton Health Sciences will experience the best elder friendly care*

For further information please contact,

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*…Helping to maintain cognitive, physical and emotional well-being in hospitalized older patients*

