Advancing the Utilization of Home Health Nursing Competencies Across Canada

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Learning Outcomes

- Discuss findings and recommendations from a 2012-2013 CHNC study on uptake of HHN competencies

- Understand the supportive structures and strategies required by organizations to utilize HHN competencies

- Discuss formal processes to increase the uptake of the utilization of HHN competencies across Canada

Background

- Home Health Nursing Competencies (2010)

- Current uptake of competencies

Study Purpose

- To understand the barriers and facilitators to utilization of Home Health Nursing Competencies within Home Health Care agencies throughout Canada

Study Design: Mixed Method

Inductive Paradigm

- Qualitative→   Quantitative
- Focus Groups→   Online survey

                            (cross sectional-descriptive)

Study Samples

Focus Group
- 5 sessions across Canada
  - Guiding questions focused on awareness, utilization, facilitators and barriers to uptake
- Purposive sample
  - Home Health Care leaders
    - policy development level/ operational level

Online Survey
- Questionnaire
  - Using guiding questions and themes identified from focus groups
- Purposive Sample
  - Managers, Consultants, Educators, Nursing Practice Specialists, Front line staff

Focus Group: Demographics

CHNC IBCC

Descriptive
- **11 participants total**
  - 3/ Eastern time zone
  - 4/ Atlantic time zone
  - 3/ Mountain time zone
  - 1/ Central time zone
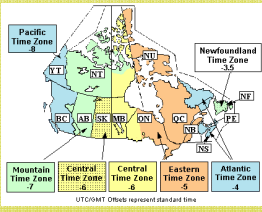 - 0 / Pacific time zone

- **Roles/titles**
  - Manager (5)
  - Consultant (2)
  - Director (2)
  - Coordinator (1)
  - Practice leader (1)

Focus Group Themes

CHNC IBCC

- **Awareness**
  - Limited awareness

- **Utilization**
  - Aligning with roles, variable access, use of technology

- **Facilitators**
  - Organizational support for certification, champions, organizational communication, competency tools, education, integration into practice

- **Barriers**
  - Competing priorities, Management/Leadership

Focus Group Theme: Limited Awareness

CHNC IBCC

- " I personally just became aware of them."

- " I was not aware [of them]prior to the invite."

- "I was aware of them…I was thinking they were more related to Public Health."

- "Front line staff aren't aware…it's not being used where it should be."

Focus Group Theme: Roles

CHNC IBCC

- **Need to Align Competencies with Roles**

  - "…our CHNs are doing Home Care so they're not home health nurses therefore language, i.e., HHN Competencies, is misleading for some. "

  - "…there is a sense that it is more for CHNs…or for more traditional, like Public Health Nursing vs. home care/home health nursing, that maybe people have not paid attention to them. "

Focus Group Theme: Access

CHNC IBCC

- **Variable Access**
  - "..when they came out, we made sure that two copies were sent to each one of our offices"
  - "…we do have hard copies in some cases"
  - some distribution in orientation or handouts

- **Use of Technology**
  - "...I would wager a guess that most of our nurses are not even aware of that (read-only available online)"
  - "..online access is a challenge, it's posted in a format that I can't easily sent to my staff…I can't print it and read it unless I pay $10…"

Focus Group Theme: Integration

CHNC IBCC

- **Formal Integration Into Practice**
  - "...discussed at in-services, as well, when they first came out in preparation for professional development plans"
  - "…had also hoped to integrate the competencies into our performance appraisals document…"
  - "…we also gave it to new nurses who come to work, during the orientation it's discussed….indirectly we are using them on a daily basis…it's just not a formalized process"
  - "…they are actually a line item in the objectives piece (of the learning plans)"
  - "…(use the HHN competencies) to develop policies/forms/care tools/care delivery models etc."

Focus Group Theme: Leadership

- **Management/Leadership but not Front Line Nurses**

  - "..our practice quality and risk educators would be the most familiar with them"
  - "Health services is most familiar, but not front line staff."
  - "...these kind of documents often remain with systems level folks and seldom make it to front line."
  - "…not being accessible to front line nurses, to not necessarily having support from upper management to use them."

Focus Group Theme: Organizational Support

- **Organizational Support for Certification**

  - "…we feel strongly about and try to encourage all of our managers and supervisors to obtain certification…that is still a bit of a struggle…so getting our nurses to do it is even more of a struggle. "
  - "…we strongly recommend, you know, that our nurses become certified. "

Focus Group Themes: Champions & Communication

- **Importance of Champions to Increase Dissemination/Use**
  - "…team leaders…may go out with staff…and could reference the competencies…so they tend to be the champions"
  - "Our clinical nurse coordinators who do the orientation…I think the work that they do around supporting and promoting the competencies is really important"

- **Importance of Ongoing Communication of Competencies**
  - "…every two months we have a continuing care meeting which is a venue to discuss competencies."

Focus Group Theme: Education

- **Importance of Education**

  - "they need an explanation as to how they are applicable to home health nursing work…"
  - "…need greater clarification in terms of who these apply to, i.e., CHNs do home care work but are not called HHN…so they don't necessarily see the HHN Competencies as applying to them"

Focus Group Theme: Competency Tools

- **Importance of Competency Tools (to increase application)**
  - "…one of the things that was really beneficial to disseminating the Standards was the tool kit…I think something similar to the tool kit, around the competencies, would help us get some momentum"
  - "they need explanation as to how they are applicable to HHN work. Perhaps case studies with discussion as to where the competencies are seen in the case. It is not familiar language for HHN so they need to see themselves in the competencies"
  - "…would have to have supporting education to go along with it (the competency tool [kit])"

Focus Group Theme: Competing Priorities

- **Difficulties with Competing Priorities/Lack of Time**
  - " a lot of education dollars are spent on other priorities so this sort of thing falls to the wayside."
  - "I think we have people who would be committed to the work and believe in it, it's just the time commitment and making it a priority."
  - Other barriers

Online Survey: Results

CHNC · IECC

- 61 participants received the survey link, 44 completed the survey (72% response rate)

- Of the 44 participants who completed
  - 54.55% have been practicing nursing for 26+years

Online Survey: Awareness

CHNC · IECC

Awareness of CHNC, HHN Competencies continued
- Perceived level of awareness among groups/individuals within their organization

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Online Survey: Awareness

CHNC · IECC

Awareness of CHNC, HHN Competencies continued
- Awareness increased with years of nursing practice

	0-5 years	6-11 years	12-15 years	16-20 years	21-25 years	26+ years	Total
Q9: Yes	0% 0	4% 1	4% 1	16% 4	12% 3	64% 16	25

Awareness of competencies

Online Survey: Accessibility

CHNC · IECC

Accessibility of HHN competencies within their organizations
- 66% felt they were accessible
- Primary means of accessing competencies was through the following (see graph)

Online Survey: Perceived Access

CHNC · IECC

- Perceived level of access to competencies among staff ; highest among managers (53%), educators (47%), front line (41%)

Online Survey: Use

CHNC · IECC

- Current use of the HHN Competencies within the organizations

Online Survey: Facilitators

- Managers were considered to be the #1 supporters within the organization that promote the dissemination of the competencies

- Education on competencies was identified as the main support needed in the future to increase utilization and dissemination

Online Survey: Future Plans

- 59% have future plans to utilize the competencies within their organization; planned uses include:
  - 67% for guiding practice
  - 60% for performance/professional development
  - 53% integrate within orientation
  - 47% for job profiles, performance appraisals, care tools/models

Online Survey: Barriers

- Main barriers to use and dissemination of the competencies include:
  - competing priorities (52%) and lack of financial resources (48%)

- 76% felt that their organization supported CNA certification for CHNC
  - providing information to staff (59%) and linking with others interested in certification (45%)

Other Barriers?

- Any other barriers that we did not discuss that you are experiencing in your place of work?

Limitations

- Recognition of how HHN is structured in this country (private and public)
  - Some barriers are larger in private sector HHN agencies
  - Difference in terminology between Eastern and Western Canada
- Not everyone answered every question: may have skewed results
- Small pool to recruit from
- Cross Canadian participation with time zones and logistics

Recommendations from Participants

- Need to increase awareness of HHN Competencies among Home Health Nurses
  - Consider language used (HHN vs. CHN)
  - Make HHN Competencies more visible (i.e., at conferences, websites etc)
  - Develop competency tools to support application and integration into practice
  - Consider educational opportunities around HHN Competencies (i.e., webinars, online learning modules)
  - Identify champions within organization to support integration/understanding of HHN Competencies

Recommendations from Participants

- Need to increase accessibility of HHN Competencies
  - Make competencies more accessible online (i.e., consider read-only format and costs associated)
  - Promote HHN Competencies, including how to access
  - Develop strategies to ensure HHN Competencies reach front line staff (targeted approaches)

Recommendations from Participants

- Need to develop formalized processes to ensure HHN Competencies are applied and integrated into practice
  - Gather examples of job descriptions, performance measurements, performance appraisals which integrate HHN Competencies
  - Integrate HHN Competencies within professional development tools within organization (ensures integration to practice)
  - Integrate HHN Competency discussions within team meetings (regular discussion to ensure integration)

Strategies

- At your tables consider 3 of the suggestions provided by the focus groups and on line survey. Are the strategies feasible? What would need to happen for them to be put into place?
- Do you have any other suggestions that were not listed?

Next Steps

What action can we take? What can we do at the various levels of our working structures?

- Local Level
- Regional Level
- National Level

Thank you for your participation!