Improving Access to Specialist Care for an Aging Population

The eConsultBASE™ service improves access to specialist care for patients by facilitating electronic communication between primary care providers (PCPs) and specialists.

Older individuals face particular challenges in accessing specialist care.

With high frequencies of multimorbidities and mobility issues, older persons stand to benefit from shorter wait times and better access to care.

We conducted a cross-sectional analysis of eConsult cases submitted between April 15, 2011 and July 31, 2015 for all patients above the age of 65.

Outcomes of eConsults

- 38% of eConsult cases confirmed the PCPs’ course of action.
- 59% of cases provided PCPs with a new or additional course of action.

Most popular specialty groups

- Dermatology (14%)
- Cardiology (11%)
- Endocrinology (10%)
- Hematology (10%)
- Neurology (7%)

1,796 cases were submitted for older persons, accounting for 21.3% of all cases during the study period.

Specialists responded to cases in a median of 0.8 days.

In 94% of cases, providers rated eConsult as having great or excellent value for themselves and their patients.

Impact

The eConsult service results in timely access to specialist care for older persons.

Reference:

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