

World Congress on

Health and Medical Sociology

September 19-20, 2016 Las Vegas, USA

THE BENEFITS OF BEHAVIORAL CARDIOLOGY: AN APPROACH TO REDUCING HOSPITAL READMISSIONS IN HEART FAILURE PATIENTS

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Heart disease is among the leading causes of death in the United States and behavioral health plays a significant role in the prevention and treatment of cardiovascular disease. Lack of healthy behaviors and adherence with medical treatment regimens is often at the root of readmission rates. HF patients contribute to high hospital readmission rates nationwide. Due to the increase in hospital readmission rates, Healthcare Management is holding hospitals accountable for patients who are readmitted within thirty days. Research indicates that hospitals are not considering psychological factors contributing to readmission nor they are addressing these issues while the patient is within the primary care setting. Twenty-five percent of patients with heart failure experience depressive symptoms. Studies have demonstrated that patients with systolic dysfunction and depression are at higher risk for re-hospitalization. Research demonstrates that left ventricular ejection fraction in heart failure patients with depressive symptoms tends to be less than or equal to 40%. Reduced ejection fraction inherently places patients at increased risk for cognitive impairments, which in turn impairs their ability to adhere to medical regimens. Reduced ejection fraction coupled with preexisting depressive symptomatology creates greater obstacles for patients living with heart failure. Integrating health psychology and creating behavioral cardiology teams have proven to decrease hospital readmission rates and reduce hospital fines.

Biography

Christine Machado-Denis is a doctoral candidate at Albizu University. She is completing a clinical psychology degree with a specialization in Behavioral Medicine. She is currently training at the University of Miami/Jackson Health System in the consultation/liaison service. She strives to expand her research of behavioral cardiology and work with cardiac transplantation. Currently, she is contributing a book chapter discussing Psychopharmacology and cardiac rehabilitation.

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