

INTERACT and Palliative Care

INTERACT:

Staten Island has 10 skilled nursing facilities (SNF) all part of the Staten Island Performing Provider System (SI PPS) implementing INTERACT and palliative care. The INTERACT program developed by Dr. Ouslander stands for “Interventions to Reduce Acute Care Transfers” which compliments current care delivery with a focus on early identification of a patient’s change in condition. The goal is to continually improve care for residents in SNFs through four components: communication, care paths, quality improvement and advance care planning.

INTERACT supports enhanced communication among SNF staff as well as with the emergency departments (ED) and with families. Providers in SNFs are able to provide a wider range of care than in the past with their increased clinical capabilities. Patients can receive services such as intravenous (IV) antibiotics, pain management and STAT x-rays while remaining in the facility. Communicating these capabilities to the ED will increase understanding of what continuing care services can be given on site in the SNF. Also, informing families will help them understand what can be done in the facility instead of transferring their loved ones to the ED for similar services. The idea is for SNF staff to catch changes in their patients’ condition early on and to administer the care needed on site before the condition worsens.

Palliative Care:

Sometimes there are instances when an alternative approach to care is best for the patient. Palliative care is defined by the National Consensus Project for Quality Palliative Care as having the “goals of enhancing quality of life for patient and family, optimizing function, helping with decision-making, and providing opportunities for personal growth”. Palliative care can be appropriate for someone at any age with any illness. Exploring this option of care with patients and families focuses on the patient’s needs is important and more SNF staff will be trained to deliver this service.

INTERACT and palliative care will grow in each SNF with continued staff training and education. Dr. Outlander points out that the keys to successfully implementing INTERACT are to provide person-centered care with special attention on individual and family preferences. This can be achieved by using the tools that the program provides. SI PPS will be working with the 10 SNFs, the EDs and our community on ongoing quality improvement processes and the sharing of best practices among our providers.