

Alberta's Strategic Clinical Networks

Adult Depression in Primary Care

The Goal

Depression places a large burden on patients, families and the health care system and is often dealt with at a primary care level. This project aims to improve patient outcomes, decrease variation of care and costs of treatment amongst providers.



The Process

In order to improve treatment for depression, the Addiction and Mental Health Strategic Clinical Network developed a clinical trial comparing three interventions commonly used in primary care: an Alberta-developed clinical pathway, an online intervention, and treatment as usual. Following a review of the trial, data indicated no significant difference between the three interventions.

Based on these results, physicians, primary care clinicians, and patients were surveyed to explore what their experiences and needs were with providing and receiving treatment for depression. Over half of the Primary Care Networks (PCNs) participated in this process.

The Outcome

Results from the clinical trial were merged with survey data to create recommendations on how to improve the treatment of depression in primary care.

The main recommendations are:

1. Create a list of resources that clinicians and patients can use for information, services, and support related to depression.
2. Investigate ways to provide primary care physicians with additional resources and support from other health care professionals with expertise in mental health in helping treat patients.

Through the work of the clinical trial and surveys, 22 PCNs, have expressed interest in being part of implementing the recommendations.

The Team

This project is led by the Addiction and Mental Health Strategic Clinical Network (SCN) with the support of Primary Care Networks (PCNs) and Zone operational teams.