Facilitating successful implementation of a person-centred intervention for carer assessment and support: the key role of ‘champions’

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Background

- The Carer Support Needs Assessment Tool (CSNAT) is a comprehensive, validated assessment tool which facilitates support for family carers of adults with life-limiting conditions. 1,2
- For use in practice, the CSNAT is incorporated into a 5-stage process referred to as The CSNAT Approach; together these two components form the CSNAT intervention.
- The use of this intervention requires a change in practice from a practitioner-led, to a carer-led assessment process. 3
- As changing practice takes some time, we have developed a strategy for implementing the CSNAT intervention where facilitation by intervention champions is key.

Aim

- To investigate components of facilitation that need to be in place to successfully implement the CSNAT intervention across palliative/end-of-life care.

Methods

- The implementation of the CSNAT intervention was investigated in 36 palliative/end of life care services within the UK.
- 38 practitioners with the role of intervention champion (internal facilitation) within each participating service were interviewed at three and six months after start of the CSNAT implementation.
- Researcher field notes from teleconference support sessions with champions were collected (external facilitation).

Results: how to facilitate successful implementation of the CSNAT intervention

Support from Senior Management Team

Approval for implementing the CSNAT intervention and for ‘dedicated time’ to do the work required.

Selection of champions

Team manager/leader in the ‘lead champion’ role and two further practitioners who will be using the CSNAT intervention in practice. This team will lead on the implementation.

Larger teams require additional champions and larger organisations require champions in each service.

Period of pre-implementation planning

Careful planning for how the use of the CSNAT intervention will work within each service; a small pilot is recommended.

Establish a carer record: think about this early on (often takes longer than anticipated).

Support from Senior Management Team


Conclusions

- Facilitation needs to be a ‘team effort’ and tailored to meet the needs of the individual service.
- Having dedicated time for both pre-implementation planning and the on-going audit and review of progress is associated with more successful implementation.
- An online implementation toolkit is currently being piloted to help guide organisations through these key recommendations.

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