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Marshall, Skye; Fei, Xinzhu (Allison); Giang, Joanna; Warner, Molly; Chan, Hei Chun (Nicholas); Isenring, Elisabeth; Van der Meij, Barbara S; Collins, Clare E.; de van der Schueren, Marian; Banbury, Mark; Milte, Rachel

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The FREER Pilot Study
Family in Rehabilitation: EmpowERing Carers for Improved Malnutrition Outcomes

Xinzhu (Allison) Fei
Master of Nutrition and Dietetic Practice
Research Team

Dr. Skye Marshall
Molly Warner
Joanna Giang
Xinzu Fei
Hei Chun Nicholas Chan
Dr. Elizabeth Isenring
Dr. Barbara van de Meij
Dr. Clare Collins
Dr. Marian de van der Schueren
Mark Banbury
Dr. Rachel Milte
Protein-Energy Malnutrition

50% for Rehabilitation


Malnourished older adults admitted to rehabilitation in rural New South Wales remain malnourished throughout rehabilitation and once discharged back to the community: A prospective cohort study.

S. Marshall, A. Young, J. Bauer, E. Isenring

Short-term nutrition care during rehabilitation admission is not sufficient for long-term nutrition outcomes for older inpatients.
Patient- and Family Carer- Centred Care Model

https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/mar/13/experts-question-bupa-care-home-ban-on-most-family-visits
Objectives

The primary outcome aimed to determine if the FREER intervention in malnourished older adults during and post-rehabilitation improve nutritional status, compared with the usual care.

Secondary outcomes evaluated physical function, quality of life, hospital and aged care admission post-discharge, family carer burden, and patient and family carer service satisfaction.
Method

A pragmatic two-arm historically-controlled prospective pilot intervention study.

Rehabilitation unit in rural New South Wales, Australia.

Older adults (≥65 years)
The FREER Intervention:

Historically Controlled group: Patient-centred care
2. Standard nutrition support.

Intervention group: Patient- and Family care-centred nutrition care using 3 strategies:
1. Nutrition counselling during rehabilitation admission
2. Telehealth follow-up during 3-month post-discharge
3. Provision of individualized education resources

Finding 1: Nutrition Status

Improvement in Nutritional Assessment score Between two groups between timepoints

- Admission to discharge: 60% control, 100% intervention, $P=0.01^*$
- Discharge to 3-month post-discharge: 37.5% control, 50% intervention, $P=0.60$
- Admission to 3-month post-discharge: 62.5% control, 70% intervention, $P=0.74$

Legend:
- Blue: control
- Green: intervention
Finding 2:

- More participants in the intervention group were discharged to the community (home or to family and friends), and fewer were institutionalised compared to the control group (p<0.01).
Finding 3: Carer burden

- Little or no burden was reported to most of family carers pre and post the rehabilitation (>80%, n=10 at 3-month post-discharge).
- Participants (67%) and family carers (60%) reported a good or very good overall satisfaction with the intervention.
Discussion & Recommendation

Positive impacts
Translation into practice
Inform a full RCT
Growing demand
Continuum of nutrition care policy
Limitations

Study design: used historical control group.

Data collection was not blinded.
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Hannah Mayr: APD, Subject Convenor

Evelyn Rathbone: Bond Statistician

Conflicts of interest:

None declared.

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Reference


Thank You! Questions?