NEWLY DIAGNOSED CLINIC: EMERGING MODEL IN MS CARE
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Background

The vision of the Tanner Center & Foundation for MS (TC&F) in collaboration with the NMSS is to provide initial evaluations, psychosocial interventions, meaningful information, and appropriate home exercise programs to ensure compliance with disease modifying therapies, provide a social network of healthcare specialists, and promote wellness through exercise and coping strategies.

Methods

The Tanner Center & Foundation for MS provides clinic on a weekly basis to address the needs of those individuals recently diagnosed with MS. The local chapter of the NMSS provides social work intervention through a telephone interview identifying concerns prior to clinic. On clinic day, the TC&F provides an occupational therapy, physical therapy, and neurocognitive evaluation utilizing the MSFC, TUG, FSS and CNS vital signs. Each discipline provides home exercise programs, compensatory techniques, strategies for cognitive issues, and counseling for adjustment to disease.

Results

The Newly Diagnosed MS Clinic opened August 12, 2012 with positive feedback thus far. The therapists have been able to keep clients employed through compensatory strategies and energy conservation techniques, recommend continued therapy services for one or more disciplines, and positively impact client's quality of life. The clinic has connected clients with community resources in their area such as wellness programs, self help groups, DME vendors, cooling vest companies, and local therapists. We have served over 30 clients and numerous family members throughout the state.

Discussion and Conclusion

The goal of the Tanner Center & Foundation has been to reach people at initial diagnosis to ascertain baseline data and begin clients on the path of disease management with the right "tools and knowledge". The TC&F in collaboration with the NMSS wish to reach this clientele at the initial stages instead of when most people seek services, in crisis mode. Through the initial information gathered by the social worker and the evaluations performed by the therapists, the center now has groundwork to help manage it's clients' various needs.

Objectives

To provide a multidisciplinary approach to managing multiple sclerosis in early diagnosis. To provide individuals with MS with tools necessary to manage this chronic disease through baseline evaluations, social services, compensatory techniques, exercise programs, and psychological strategies and techniques.

Feedback from the Newly Diagnosed Clinic:

"I would like to compliment the clinic on how much knowledge everyone had about MS and what I could do to help myself"

"The care and concern of your employees towards their patients is awesome! It is as if they greet you with arms wide open"

"I like having the team on site and all working together. The friendliest staff- everyone knows my name."

Statistics:

Average Age: 37
Age Range: 16-83
Number of females: 22
Number of males: 7
Caucasian: 20
African American: 9
Other Nationalities: 0