

Abstract

Attention families and patients...Heart Failure University in 10 minutes.

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Purpose: Heart Failure University (HFU) is an inter-professionally taught class for patients and their families. The purpose of this survey was to demonstrate whether or not HFU improved patient confidence for self-care.

Background: Readmissions for heart failure are costly to the patient, the family and hospital systems. It is well documented that increased patient engagement and confidence in self-care improves the HF patient's quality of life. Hospitals are exploring innovative ways to engage HF patients and families. There is little information regarding the benefit of conducting an inpatient heart failure program for patients and families.

Methods: HFU was implemented in a large teaching hospital's cardiology unit. A needs assessment showed patients had limited confidence in self-care despite intensive education. These data were presented to an inter-professional group who then developed HFU. A voluntary survey was available to all participants that evaluated confidence using the zone tool, daily weights and identification of heart failure symptoms. The survey also asked about class usefulness.

Results: Thirty-two surveys were returned from 79 attendees. Results reveal 87% felt confident they could recognize HF symptoms, 88% reported they could use the zone tool to support self-care, and 93% found the class helpful.

Conclusions: HFU participants reported confidence in recognizing heart failure symptoms, using the zone tool and recording daily weights. The authors recognize the limitations of self-selection of class participants and survey methodology. In conclusion, HFU is a valuable method to engage patients and families in order to optimize self-care confidence.