

Name of Document: **RGPs of Ontario – Geriatric Emergency Management**

Date: 2006

Agency: 8 RGPs at Emergency Departments in Kingston, Hamilton, London, and Toronto. Funded by MOHLTC.

Initiative: Purpose was to address the needs of both frail seniors and ED staff. MOHLTC funded 8 GEM nursing positions. Goals:

- Service development: deliver clinical service and provide staff with opportunities for professional development, peer support, and networking
- Improve patient outcomes: reduce recidivism, decrease length of stay, and divert hospital admissions
- Build capacity: develop and document innovative evidence-based models of service and facilitate knowledge transfer across the spectrum of care.
- Program evaluation: measure impact of GEM program.

Four main components of GEM program:

- Routine risk screening for all seniors 75 and older
- Targeted geriatric nursing assessment in ER by the Domain Management Model
- Initiative of a referral and follow-up process as part of ER disposition planning whether the patient is discharged home, back to LTC, or admitted to hospital
- Multi-dimensional capacity building with GEM stakeholders

Results:

- GEM nurses increased the capacity of health care providers both with the ER and the region to address the complex needs of the frail elderly
- GEM nurses identified high risk seniors and addressed unrecognized geriatric issues that increased the probability of adverse outcomes
- GEM nurses enhanced patient discharge processes and promoted safe discharge
- GEM intervention may divert unnecessary hospital admissions
- GEM nurses identified and encouraged appropriate admissions
- GEM enhanced service linkages within the hospital and community

Overall recommendation: Availability of a geriatric-focused nurse in the ER results in improved quality of care and better patient outcomes. GEM services should be widely available in Ontario.