

HELP Enrollment process

- **To enroll a patient**, our HELP team must first assess the patient, administer a cognitive screening test (MiniCog), and determine whether the patient meets enrollment criteria. HELP is available on the following hospital units: AIMA, AIMB, CVMU, OTSS, SSTU, NAC, and MICU. HELP provides unenrolled "friendly visits" to patients on IMR evenings or on weekends as time permits.
- **Screening for enrollment is performed daily M-F by HELP staff.** Every morning we review hospital census for
 - Patients \geq 70 years
 - Admitted < 48 hours, but have an expected length of stay > 2 days
 - Has 1 or more risk factors for developing delirium
 - Appropriate to receive HELP volunteer visits and participate in targeted interventions

Exclusion criteria

- Already delirious or delirious at time of admission
- On contact, airborne, or droplet precautions
- Combative or other behaviors that may place volunteers at risk
- Cannot meaningfully communicate with volunteers
- Expected length of stay is less than 2 days
- Patient "opts out" of HELP visits

After a patient has been evaluated and enrolled in HELP:

- The Elder Life Specialist (ELS) builds plan of volunteer interventions, and
- The Elder Life Nurse Specialist (ELNS) writes a Progress Note in Epic, enters a Nurse-to-Nurse communication order, and posts a "Sticky Note" and/or sends a text page to the hospitalist treatment team within 24 hours of enrollment
- HELP volunteers carry out interventions during three shifts a day

Limitations of HELP

Although HELP has proven to be an effective program and has reduced the incidence of delirium in our hospital, we have some limitations. **We do our best to enroll as many non-delirious patients age 70+ as possible given our limited resources.** However:

- We are not able to enroll patients on the weekends, or other times when the ELS or ELNS are out of the office.
- We cannot enroll patients who are on Contact/Droplet/Airborne Precautions as we do not have sufficient HELP volunteers with PPE training. HELP is working with Infection Control to change this.