

Evaluation of a patient-centred biopsychosocial blended collaborative Care Pathway for the treatment of multi-morbid Elderly patients – The ESCAPE clinical study

Objective: A Blended Collaborative Care strategy (BCC) can improve treatment of patients with medical-mental comorbidity. However, patients often suffer from multiple chronic conditions. The European Union-funded ESCAPE project will examine the impact of a BCC intervention targeting patients aged 65+ with heart failure, 2+ medical comorbidities plus mental distress/disorder.

Methods: After developing an extended and modified BCC strategy (presented by Lühmann et al., Kohlmann et al., Gostoli et al.) and a dedicated web-based platform (Velasco et al.), we will examine this strategy in an RCT (n=300) embedded in a comprehensive cohort study following 450 patients over 18+ months. Our primary hypothesis is that the ESCAPE BCC intervention improves health-related quality of life (QoL) measured by EQ-5D-5L by ES >0.35 compared to physicians' usual care. Secondary outcomes include medical endpoints (morbidity, mortality), psychological well-being, and treatment satisfaction. Furthermore, we will assess caregiver burden and QoL, indicators for quality of care, and health-economic parameters. The non-randomized cohort will serve as an external reference for the RCT findings.

Results: We will present the study design and its implementation across participating countries including AI-supported translation of study materials into the local languages. Results from a feasibility study will also be reported.

Conclusion: ESCAPE expands the BCC strategy to support treatment of multimorbid older patients and involve their carers, actively integrate GP's treatment plans and state-of-the-art information technology. If proven effective, the ESCAPE BCC strategy can serve as a template for patients with different multimorbidities across diverse healthcare systems throughout Europe.

Herrmann-Lingen C¹, Zelenak C¹, Nagel J¹, Bersch K¹, Wicker M¹, Herbeck Belnap B¹, Friede T¹, Lühmann D², Ousager J³, Stock S⁴, Albus C⁴, Beresnevaite M⁵, Doyle F⁶, McAdam B¹⁰, Skou S³, Stauder A⁷, Urbinati S⁹, Wachter R⁸, Pedersen S³, ESCAPE consortium³

¹ University of Göttingen Medical Centre, Göttingen, Germany

² University Hospital Hamburg Eppendorf, Hamburg, Germany

³ University of Southern Denmark, Odense, Denmark

⁴ University Hospital of Cologne, Cologne, Germany

⁵ Lithuanian University of Health Sciences, Kaunas, Lithuania

⁶ Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, Dublin, Ireland

⁷ Semmelweis University, Budapest, Hungary

⁸ University Hospital of Leipzig, Leipzig, Germany

⁹ Bellaria Hospital and University of Bologna, Bologna, Italy

¹⁰ Beaumont Hospital, Dublin, Ireland