

EVIDENCE SUMMARY: THE BENEFITS OF RELATIONAL CONTINUITY IN PRIMARY CARE



PREVENTIVE CARE

8/10

studies showed improvements in preventive care



UTILIZATION

61/64

studies showed positive results in lower utilization and hospitalization



MORTALITY

11/11

studies showed reduced mortality



HEALTH

13/16

studies showed positive results in improved health



COST SAVINGS

16/17

studies demonstrated cost savings



CARE QUALITY

10/16

studies showed positive results in overall care quality



SATISFACTION

15/16

studies showed increased patient satisfaction



ADHERENCE

6/6

studies showed improved self-management and treatment adherence



Key Messages: The Benefits of Relational Continuity in Primary Care

October 2017

Question:

What is the value of relational continuity with a primary health care provider?

Summary of findings:

A growing body of evidence points to the association of relational continuity with improved outcomes & satisfaction. For some measures (utilization, mortality), the greater the degree of attachment, the better the outcomes. Although findings are similar to those from 2016, this 2017 update includes 25 new articles, a new section on the value of relational continuity to patients and providers, and more detail on utilization outcomes and on the impact of continuity on complex patients.

Relational continuity has been associated with:

- Reduced utilization (ER visits, hospitalizations, specialist visits): 61/64 studies
 - Many of these studies focused on patients with complex needs or a chronic disease
 - Greater degree of attachment was associated with a larger impact on this outcome
- Cost savings: 16/17 studies
 - Many of these studies focused on patients with complex needs or a chronic disease
- Reduced mortality: 11/11
- Improved health & quality of life: 13/16 studies
- Improved self-management & treatment adherence by patients: 6/6 studies
- Improved preventive service delivery rates: 8/10 studies
- Improved quality: 10/16 studies
- Improved patient satisfaction & experience: 15/16 studies
 - More so in patients with complex needs or a chronic disease
- Relational continuity is valued by patients: 10/10
 - Most valued by vulnerable patients, & those with complex needs or a chronic disease
 - Less important to younger patients, & those with only acute health concerns
- Improved staff satisfaction & experience: 4/4 studies
- Relational continuity is valued by providers: 7/7
 - most valued when treating patients with complex needs