

## Pilot Pragmatic Clinical Trial to Embed Tele-Savvy into Health Care Systems

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**OBJECTIVE:** To determine feasibility of conducting an ePCT of the Tele-Savvy care partner intervention in health care systems; assess implementation of electronic health record (EHR)-based care partner identification and invitation strategy; and determine viability of collecting and storing care partner outcome data in EHR patient portals.



### DESIGN, SETTING, AND PARTICIPANTS:

- Pilot study using an individual caregiver-level randomized design
- 2 geriatrics and dementia care outpatient clinics in health care systems in Connecticut and Georgia
- Care partners of older adults living at home with dementia who are patients in the two outpatient care settings



### INTERVENTION AND IMPLEMENTATION:

- Interventions: Tele-Savvy (TS) and Caregiving During Crisis (CDC)
- Train clinic-based licensed clinical social workers (LCSW) to facilitate Tele-Savvy synchronous weekly sessions and guide care partners to asynchronous materials between weekly sessions
- Embed care partner identification and invitation strategy into daily clinic workflow



**RELEVANCE:** This pilot study will inform design of a full-scale ePCT evaluating capacity of geriatrics and dementia care outpatient clinics to offer Tele-Savvy to care partners, and to routinely store care partner outcome data in EHR systems. This work has the potential to make Tele-Savvy and other educational and skill-building programs widely available to care partners of older adults living with dementia.



### MEASURES:

#### Implementation evaluation endpoints:

- % complete TS program with fidelity to 3 successive care partner cohorts at each health care system
- Clinic staff acceptability of willingness to adopt TS as a routinely-offered care partner dementia care program
- Successful build-out of EHR system to accommodate care partner-clinic communication and collection and storage of clinically-relevant care partner-reported outcome data

#### Primary clinical outcome:

- Self-reported care partner mastery

### RESULTS:



- 74 care partners enrolled in TS (n=44) or CDC (n=30); 73% female, 20% non-White, mean (SD) age=65 (11.7) years
- 40% completed all TS sessions; 86% accessed asynchronous training materials; TS sessions delivered with high fidelity
- EHR system at one site successfully built-out to accommodate care partners as planned; other site was in EHR system transition during pilot study
- Clinic staff willingness to adopt TS; TS care partner mastery improved (moderate to large effect size); care partner stress reduced and responses to behaviors decreased in TS and CDC groups.