Introduction
• Peer Support Groups are a valuable resource to patients and their families.
• Evidence supports Peer Support Groups improve patient coping and re-integration after a life changing event.
• A stroke survivor expressed frustration with the lack of an acute care Stroke Survivor visitation program.

Purpose
• Develop a Stroke Survivor visitation program for inpatients.
• Monitor performance of the program.

Objectives
• Participants will be able to utilize information to develop similar programs at their facilities.

Creation of POSSE Program
• Stroke Leaders collaborated with the Volunteer department to create a visitation program that met regulatory requirements.
• Stroke Leaders screened potential volunteers by conducting one on one interviews.
• Establish a training plan for selected volunteers.
  • Attend hospital orientation for volunteers
  • Attend 8 hour training designed for volunteers who visit patients
• Consulted Nurse Research Scientist to create a program evaluation tool.
• Created work flow process and tools to facilitate visits.
• Structured monthly meeting to trouble shoot and problem solve issues that were identified during visitation.

Program Highlights
• Summer 2014 program launched with five Stroke Survivors, increased to seven in 2015.
• Volunteers have varying degrees of disability and age.
• Visit patients daily on three in-patient units.
• Visit time and frequency of visit varies depending on situation
• Program Support Assistant (PSA) works closely with clinical staff to determine which patients/families are appropriate for a visit.
• PSA customizes visits.
• Visits are document including who was visited, duration and need for follow-up.
• To evaluate program effectiveness, PSA completes anonymous questionnaire post-visit.

Results
Results align with our care delivery model of Patient Family Centered Care.

Lessons Learned
• Communication is critical when working with individuals with disabilities
• Structured visits based on patients, families, and clinical staff feedback improved satisfaction with program.
• Personal self-worth was enhanced for POSSE volunteers

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Selected References

Contacts
• Mary Holden, MS, RN, CCRN; Mary.Holden@uchealth.org
• Shelly Limon, MS, RN, CNRN; Shelly.Limon@uchealth.org
• Jennifer Wolff BA; Jennifer.Wolff@uchealth.org