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Online social support in the saskatchewan heart failure network: the development of the tool

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The management and prevention of cardiovascular disease is one of the most significant challenges to the health care system, both nationally and internationally. Health 2.0 is a term that denotes the use of web-based tools by health care professionals to communicate with patients, collaborate with other health professionals, and provide health information. The purpose of this interpretive description research study was to explore the factors that have and will continue to influence or contribute to caregivers' use of social networking as a form of social support when a family member is learning to live well with heart failure. The researcher created, designed, and developed a social networking site for caregivers. Following focus group sessions with health care professionals, the Living Well with Heart Failure NING site was reviewed and approved for use. Six caregivers participated on the website and were interviewed before and after participation. The results of this research study provided an insight into the factors that have contributed to the caregivers' search for online sources of health information and peer support. The caregivers' and health care professionals' perceived consequences of utilizing online resources and social support are also identified. Health care professionals and caregivers found the social networking site easy to use, recommended the use of a moderator, and stressed the need for reliable and trustworthy information.

Biography:

Dr. Shauna Davies is an Instructor with the Faculty of Nursing at the University of Regina and works with undergraduate nursing students in all years of the program. Shauna recently completed her Doctorate of Philosophy in Nursing at the University of Saskatchewan by exploring the use of social networking tools for caregiver education. Shauna has worked as a registered nurse in a variety of clinical settings, such as medicine, surgery and critical care for over 19 years. Her research interests include the use of technology in nursing, social media in patient education and informatics in clinical practice. Shauna is also interested in the use of simulation in nursing education and how this may improve nursing care.