



Addressing Caregiver Needs in Community Care

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Introduction

- There are more than 8 million caregivers in Canada, and more than half report feeling burnt out with caregiving responsibilities [1]
- Community service providers (SP) encounter burnt out caregivers daily, however they have limited time, funding and limited readily available resources and knowledge on how to best address caregiver needs in the community
- Caregivers typically experience adverse physical, psychological, social, and financial hardships for which they are generally unprepared; therefore, caregiver needs are often overlooked and challenging to address [1]
- Caregivers report concerns about feeling lost in the healthcare system, lacking knowledge on community resources, and are unaware on how to cope with caregiver burn out [1]

Project Aim

To increase SPs' confidence level and use of resources in providing caregiver support education in the community by 30% by March 2020 within the Central Team at VHA Home Healthcare.

Methodology

- Literature review on best practice caregiver assessments and interventions to inform evaluation plan and interventions for project
- Needs assessment with SPs and caregivers
- Drafted resource manual, education session and handouts based on literature review and needs assessment
- Pilot tested interventions for face and content validity with three project champions with content expertise, mentor and Clinical Educator
- Refined materials based on feedback. VHA Communications team provided graphic design and formatting expertise
- Resources launched on the Loop, at education sessions and to be made available at various VHA office locations

Project Needs Assessment

SP Focus Group (N=~60)

Discussed barriers to addressing caregiver needs; and resources they would benefit from to address caregiver needs

Barriers

- Limited knowledge of strategies or resources to help decrease caregiver burn out
- Limited readily available caregiver resources

Resources

- Increased knowledge of community resources for caregivers
- Education on community resources and strategies to manage caregiver burn out

Interviews with Caregivers (N=4)

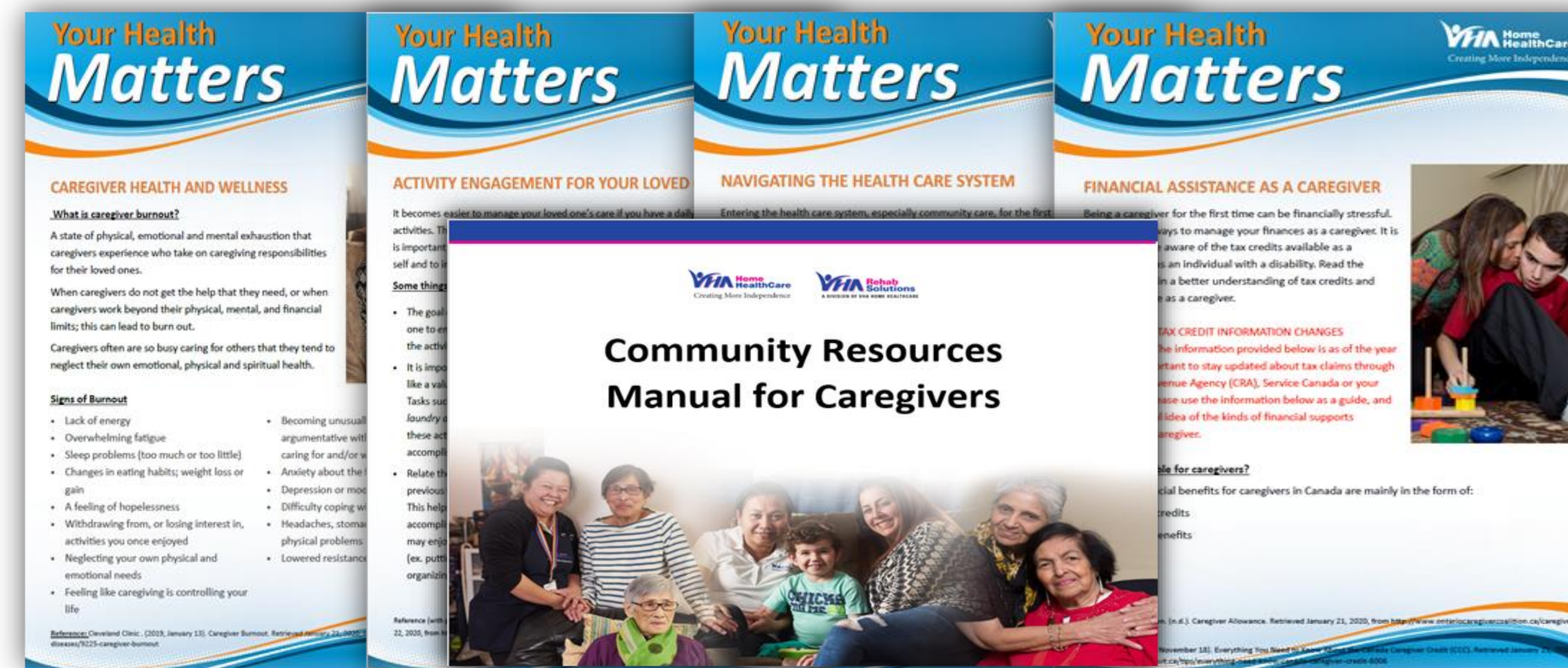
Qualitative interviews about experiences with the healthcare system and SPs

"Just simply ask how the caregiver is doing"

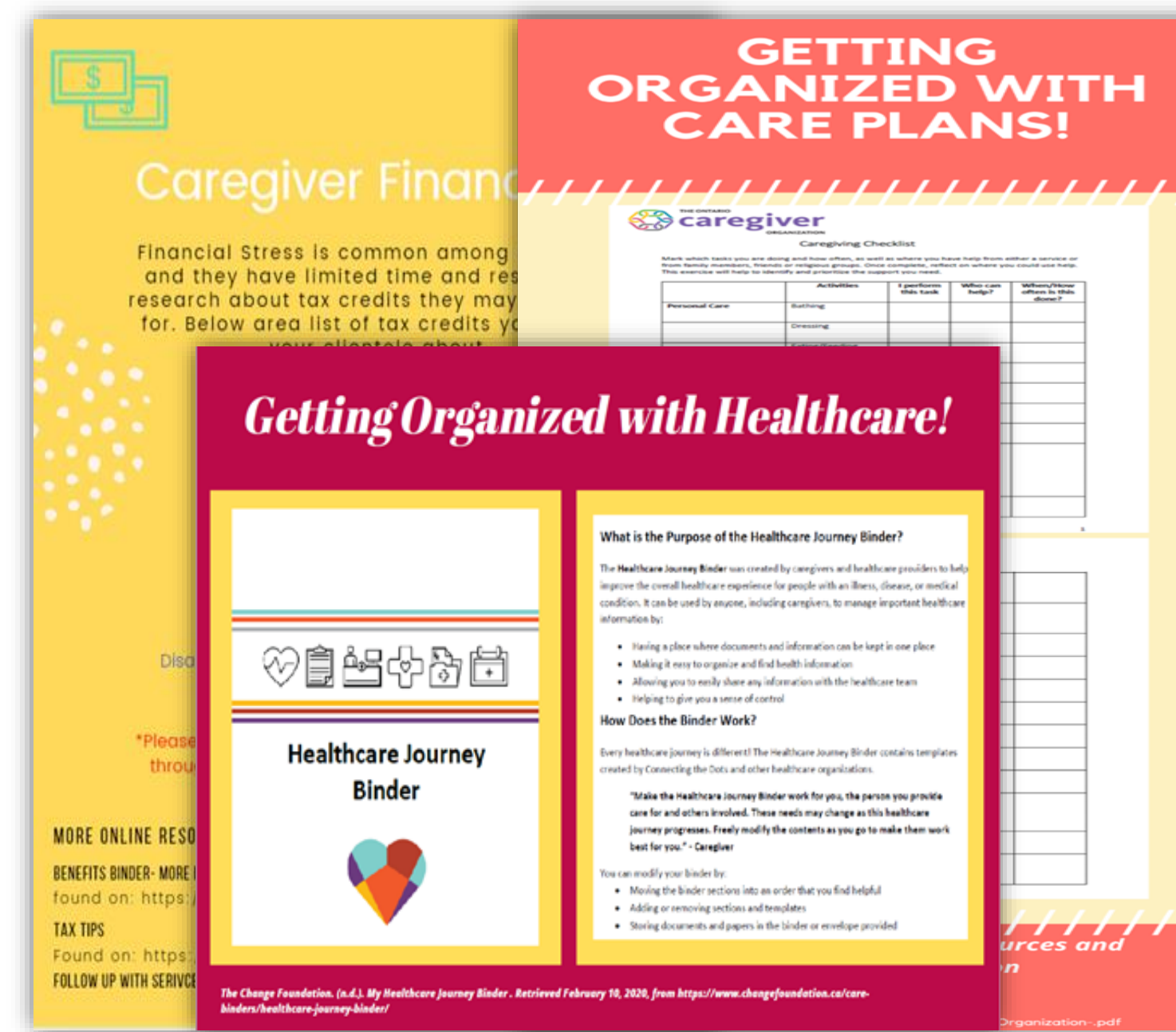
"Take 10 things you love in your life and cross out 8, that's the life of a caregiver for you"

"I feel lost in our healthcare system"

Interventions



New caregiver handouts for SPs to distribute to caregivers; Community resource manual with compilation of Toronto and York region community services



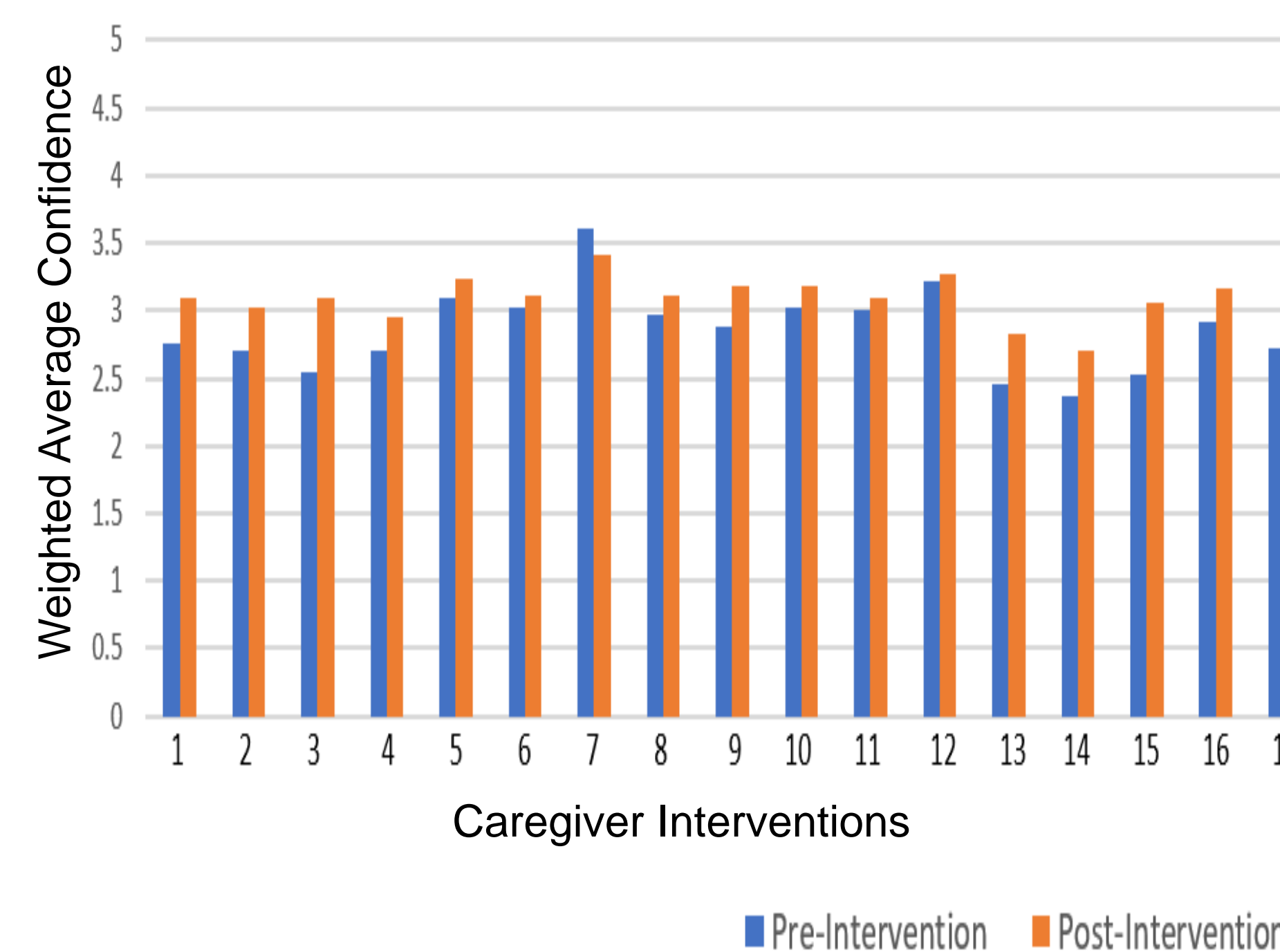
"Caregiver Tip of the Day" infographics emailed to SPs every other day for two weeks as pre-education



VHA staff education on Addressing Caregiver Needs in the Community

Outcome Measure Results

Service Providers' Average Confidence Level in Caregiver Interventions (N[pre] = 33, N[post] = 44)



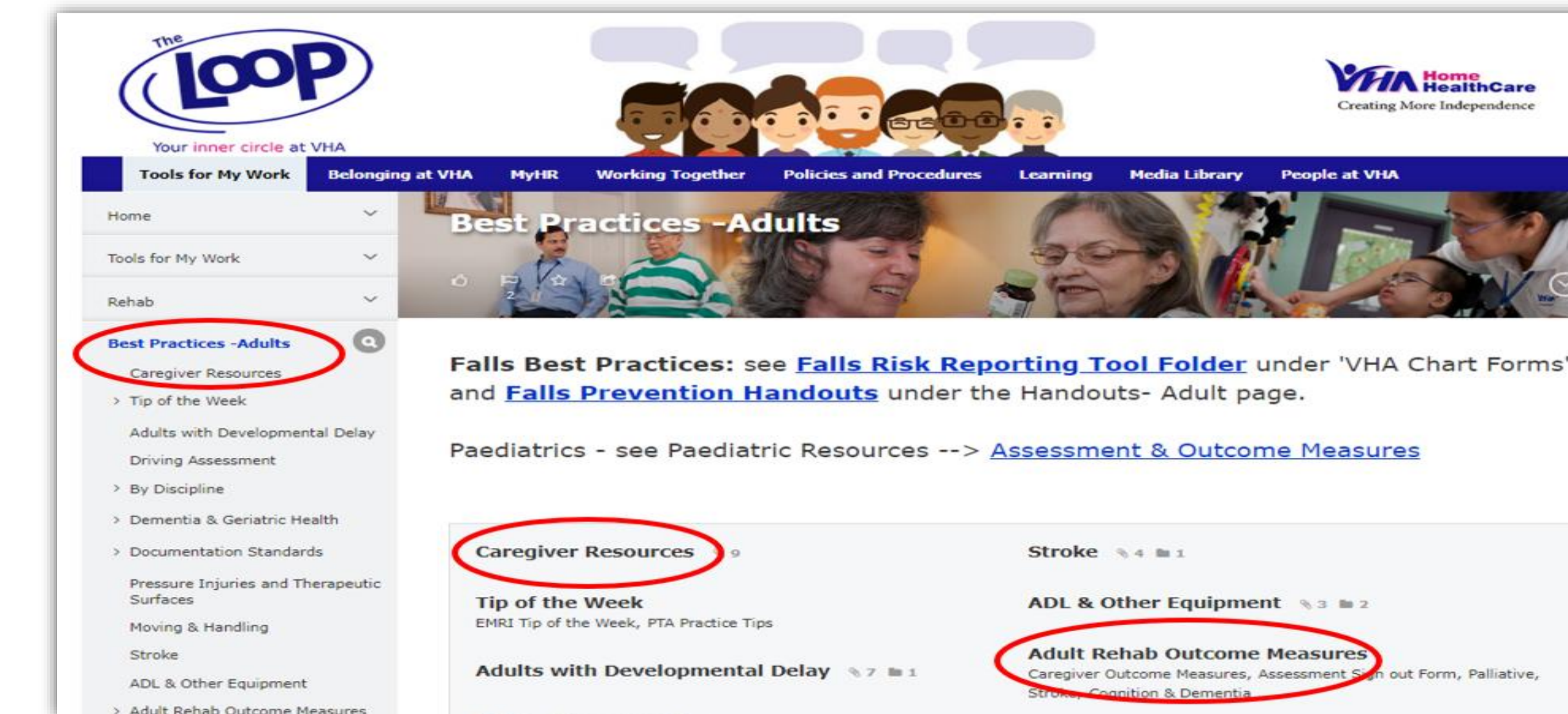
- Pre and post SP survey to measure level of confidence and use of caregiver related interventions (0 = not confident at all, 5 = extremely confident)
- SPs' confidence level in each intervention increased an average of 9%
- Overall confidence level in addressing caregiver needs increased approximately by 12%

1. How to avoid burn out
2. Coping strategies for distress
3. Education on stress management
4. Managing challenging behaviours
5. Using verbal and non-verbal cues to direct care recipient's care
6. Communicating effectively with loved ones
7. Environment modifications in the care recipient's daily care
8. Educating about disease and disease processes
9. Creating daily schedules for caregivers
10. Creating care schedules for care recipients
11. Using reality orientations to keep client oriented around home
12. Break down tasks and providing cues to care recipients
13. Knowledge of caregiver support groups
14. Knowledge of respite care services
15. Knowledge of homemaking services
16. Recommending alternative meaningful activity
17. Overall confidence with addressing caregiver needs

Process Measure Results

Online View Count of Caregiver Resources on The Loop

Feb 21/20	Feb 27/20	Feb 29/20
41	61	66



Location of new caregiver resources on the Loop. Resources first uploaded on February 14, 2020

Sustainability and Next Steps

Caregiver resources are now uploaded in a new caregiver folder on the Loop. Hard copies of the resource will also be available for SPs at VHA offices.

Caregiver education session to be refined with VHA Clinical Educator; to be an ongoing inter-professional education session for VHA staff.

Increasing caregiver specific recommendations on "Health Teaching Strategies" section on EMRI (VHA's Electronic Charting System).

Sharing project results at clinical lead meetings with team supervisors; review new caregiver resources, and changes to the Loop and they will relay information to new hires.

Impact and Conclusions

- Increased awareness about addressing caregiver needs in community care at VHA
- Clinicians reported increased confidence in various caregiver interventions
- Highlighted increased need for further education opportunities and resources for clinicians on addressing caregiver needs

References

1. Turcotte, M. (2013). *Family caregiving: What are the consequences?* (pp. 75-006). Statistics Canada

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