

ABSTRACT

POSTER TITLE: Changing Your Lens: A Focus on Parents of Medically Complex Children

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ABSTRACT

Parents of children with medical complexities (CMC) experience many challenges when caring for their child, directly impacting the social determinants of health. Parents are these children's life line, when they are not well their children suffer. Among the highest concerns experienced by parents caring for a child with medical complexities are the effects on the physical and mental health of the parent, social isolation and the significant financial impact. Providing early screening and intervention will ensure that families thrive and are supported to provide the best life for their children and youth.

The Navigator program, a 5 year federally funded program has been collecting information on gaps and solutions to some of the major challenges that parents experience when caring for their child with medical complexities. By sharing what works across Canada, the group has created a national tool kit website called "Changing Your Lens" that houses resources and tools to help educate, build awareness and capacity within hospitals and community organizations such as schools and home care, children's treatment centers, primary care provider and employers on how to support parents.

This presentation will describe the top 4 challenges that parents face and showcase the tools and resources that can help organizations tackle these challenges in the following 4 areas:

- Supporting Emotional and Physical Health for Parents
- Financial/Employment
- Reducing Social Isolation
- Respite for Parents

Resources on how to build a navigator program to better support parents of medically complex children and youth will be shared. Participants will leave with tools that are user friendly, easy to implement and replicate within their organization. The goal of the Changing Your Lens website is to help teams across Canada be better equipped to support parents of medically complex children and youth.