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Care and Construction: Assessing Differences in Nursing Home Models of Care on Resident Quality of Life

Summary

Across Canada, long-term care providers are responding to the care needs of an aging population while operating with aging buildings, staff challenges and fiscal constraints. In Nova Scotia, the continuing care sector is undergoing significant changes. Changes include an emphasis on resident-centered care, shifts in staff scope of practice and innovative physical designs (e.g., home-like settings replacing hospital-like wards). These system- and institutional-level changes will result in nursing homes providing care differently to older Nova Scotians. Despite these shifts and increasing support from funders, such innovations have not been thoroughly assessed.

This three-year study will examine the impact of different models of care in Nova Scotia's publicly funded nursing homes on resident quality of life from the perspectives of residents, family members, and staff.

Objectives

- To examine resident quality of life through the resident, family and staff experience with different models of care.
- To facilitate the dissemination of knowledge and application of research to strengthen continuing care sectors throughout Canada.

Resident quality of life will be assessed at more than 20 nursing home study sites across Nova Scotia; these homes represent three models of care with different staffing approaches and physical designs. Surveys will be conducted with 300 residents and 300 family members from these sites. Follow-up interviews with residents and focus groups with family members will provide in-depth understanding of quality of life as experienced in these different care settings. For the survey with staff, we will invite those working at the study sites and from all nursing homes in the province to

participate. It is expected that 2,000 staff will participate. Case studies will be done at one site from each model of care. Case studies will include interviews and observation with a resident, a family member and a staff person to better understand what influences interactions within the different nursing home contexts. Following data collection and analysis, workshops will be held with study participants and key stakeholders in the continuing care sector to discuss results and strategies for application of results.

Project Team

Janice Keefe (MSVU) is leading the team of researchers and decision makers comprising: Kevin Kelloway and Margaret McKee (Saint Mary's University); David Haardt, Grace Warner, Melissa Andrew, Marie Earl and Robin Stadnyk (Dalhousie University); Lori Weeks (University of Prince Edward Island); Ann McInnis and John O'Keefe (Northwoodcare Inc.); Debra Boudreau (Tideview Terrace); Sherry Keen (Windsor Elms Village); Donna Dill (Department of Health and Wellness); Lloyd Brown (Alzheimer Society of NS). Other collaborators include: Alderwood Rest Home, Shannex, Harbourview Lodge Continuing Care Centre and Health Association Nova Scotia.

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Implications and Outcomes

As a partnership between researchers and decision makers, this project facilitates knowledge translation in every phase. The evidence generated will guide the timely development of continuing care policy and practice in Nova Scotia, and across Canada.