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Dementia care in Nepalese old age homes: Critical challenges as perceived by healthcare professionals

Background: In Nepal, the number of older people with dementia is rapidly rising, and there is a need for knowledge of how to provide quality dementia care in OAHs.

Aim: To explore and describe critical challenges in current dementia care practice as perceived by Healthcare Professionals (HCPs) in Old Age Homes (OAHs) in Kathmandu, Nepal.

Methods: An exploratory hermeneutic design, employing qualitative interviews with eleven HCPs caring for residents with dementia in a total of five OAHs.

Findings: The analysis showed that HCPs found limited educational training in dementia-specific care to be a critical challenge leading to reduced quality in caregiving practice. Insufficient HCP competence in dementia-specific care undermined adequate coping with residents' cognitive disturbances and the Behavioral and Psychological Symptoms in Dementia (BPSD). Poor HCP/Medical Doctor (MD)-to-patient ratio was perceived as a critical challenge preventing proper diagnostic examination, treatment and dementia-specific care practice.

Conclusions: Limited educational training, sparse competence in mastering residents' cognitive disturbances and BPSD, and insufficient resources to ensure sufficient numbers of HCPs and MDs for proper diagnostic examination, treatment and dementia-specific care were identified as critical challenges restricting quality dementia

care in these Nepalese OAHs.

Implications for practice: The study findings indicate a need for a clear Nepalese policy and a national plan for dementia care in OAHs that includes strategies for HCP educational training and how to provide resources to ensure a sufficient workforce of HCPs and MDs for proper diagnostic examination, treatment and dementia-specific care.

Recent Publications

1. Baker, Jonathan C et al. "Staff-administered functional analysis and treatment of aggression by an elder with dementia." *Journal of applied behavior analysis* vol. 39,4 (2006): 469-74.
2. Brinkmann, S. (2012). *Qualitative inquiry in everyday life: Working with everyday life materials*. Sage Publications. doi:10.1901/jaba.2006.80-05
3. Bruckner, Tim A et al. "The mental health workforce gap in low- and middle-income countries: a needs-based approach." *Bulletin of the World Health Organization* vol. 89,3 (2011): 184-94. doi:10.2471/BLT.10.082784

Biography

Soni Shrestha has completed her medicine from Angeles University Foundation, Philippines. She worked as a medical doctor in Philippines and Nepal. She is a master graduate in Global Health from University of Bergen, Norway. She has recently published a scientific paper on Dementia care. Currently, she is working at Corona Test Station at Oslo Municipality, Norway as a Doctor/Shift leader.

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