



STRENGTHENING A PALLIATIVE APPROACH IN LONG-TERM CARE (SPA-LTC) PROJECT

RESEARCH BRIEF

Mind the gap: Is the Canadian long—term care workforce ready for a palliative care mandate?

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BACKGROUND

- The last several years have seen a global movement calling for a palliative approach within long-term care (LTC)
- Currently, such an approach remains uncommon despite its obvious need

RESEARCH TOPIC

- The aim of this paper is to explore the readiness of Canadian LTC homes for a palliative care mandate by exploring (1) efficacy for palliative care, (2) self-reported patient-centered behaviour relevant to palliative care, and (3) quality of work life at LTC homes in four Canadian provinces

METHODOLOGY

- We led a cross-sectional design and gathered self-report data
- A survey was conducted in four separate long-term care homes in the provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Ontario
- Each employee working regularly at the home was invited to participate either personally or by workplace mail

KEY FINDINGS

- Our results suggest that staff involved in patient care feel more efficacious in palliative care as they gain more experience
- Strengths in readiness included a fairly robust quality in work experience; those involved in patient care are more likely to experience satisfaction at work
- Some identified weaknesses included an apparent failure to make gains in the practice of patient-centered care with increased work experience, a relatively greater vulnerability to burnout symptoms among direct care staff, and a higher (though still infrequent) risk of experiencing trauma for staff involved most directly in patient care

CONCLUSION

- These findings indicate that although the emotional wellbeing of the Canadian LTC workforce is unlikely to impede effective care, palliative care self-efficacy and person-centred care can be further cultivated in this context