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Residential aged care: The last frontier for palliative care

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My exploratory study sought to describe the beliefs and perceptions among palliative care nurses and healthcare assistants in aged care organizations in the Melbourne, Victoria. There has been an increase in the number of people that die in facilities that offer residential aged care around the world. The organizations for aged care services in Melbourne have been encouraged and supported to offer the palliative approach of care to aged populations using applicable policy platforms. However, there has been an information gap about the capacity and ability of the institutions to adopt a palliative approach. The study used a qualitative approach where focus group discussions were conducted to collect the data from the sample population. In the findings, four different themes that were identified included 1) advocacy as a critical role; 2) being like a family; 3) communication and interaction challenges with other providers and 4) focusing on succeeding despite the existing difficulties. The respondents felt that commitment and involvement was vital for quality palliative care that required support control system and further education to meet the new requirements. Additionally, they expressed the need for strengthening the availability of specialist services and access to critical resources. In conclusion, the aged care services are in critical need of the provision of palliative care despite the presence of systemic and infrastructural impediments. Nurses and healthcare assistants should be accorded the opportunity to learn and network with peers in the system to enhance the adoption of a palliative approach to residential aged nursing care facilities.

Biography

Rana Nehfaoui is a qualified palliative care assistant in Melbourne, Australia, and she has completed the placement in Allan vale private nursing home in Australia. Palliative care is a medical therapy for individuals with chronic and terminal illnesses. The interventions offered are centered on improving the quality of life for the patients and their families by on relieving the stress and illness symptoms. Currently, Rana Nehfaoui performs numerous roles such as understanding patient choices, assisting with ADLS, documenting care needs and changes, and providing emotional support in facilities in Melbourne, Australia.

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