



The 11th Palliative Care Congress Glasgow 2016

Session Abstract

Reaching out to the palliative care needs of frail older people, and their families, living/dying in care homes

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1445 - 1545

Background:

The 'oldest old' of the UK population is the section of our society that is increasing the most quickly at a time when there is an unprecedented pressure on health and social care policies and long-term care institutions to think innovatively and strategically.

There are now three times the number of care home beds compared to all the beds in the NHS. Whereas 25 years ago care homes were seen as places for rehabilitation, now 57% frail older people die within six months of being admitted to a nursing care home. Frail older people may not have a diagnosis of cancer but they have progressive, advanced, incurable diseases that requires a palliative care approach. It is now estimated that 80% of people living in care homes have a diagnosis of dementia or serious memory problem. Dementia is now more feared than cancer. Currently, 19% of the UK population die in care homes compared to 5.6% in UK hospices.

Aim of workshop:

The aim of this workshop is to report on three areas where hospices have reached to assist care homes in their development of a palliative care approach – one that is relevant from the people living/dying in care homes. The first will highlight feasibility studies based on a thesis of improving 'the system around end of life care' and 'the lifeworld of staff' within nursing care homes. These studies then went on to form the basis of a cluster randomise controlled trial examining appropriate facilitation of end of life care programmes across 38 nursing care homes. Finally the third study will report a recent action research project to improve the quality of life for people with advanced dementia: the Namaste Care programme

Conclusion:

People will not only be exposed to different types of research methodology during the workshop but will go away with the knowledge how to approach and encourage care home managers to be involved. People will be surprised by the interest that care home staff have in undertaking research and how many are very receptive to change.