

Review

Measuring nursing assistants' knowledge, skills and attitudes in a palliative approach: A literature review



Sara Karacsony^{a,*}, Esther Chang^a, Amanda Johnson^a, Anthony Good^b, Michel Edenborough^c

^a School of Nursing and Midwifery, University of Western Sydney, Locked Bag, 1797, Penrith, NSW 2751, Australia

^b Centre for Complementary Medicine Research (CompleMED), University of Western Sydney, Locked Bag, 1797, Penrith, NSW 2751, Australia

^c School of Social Sciences and Psychology, University of Western Sydney, Locked Bag, 1797, Penrith NSW 2751, Australia

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Accepted 14 May 2015

Keywords:

Palliative approach
Nursing assistants
Residential aged care
Instrument
Knowledge
Skills
Attitudes

SUMMARY

Background: Nursing assistants are the largest aged care workforce providing care to older people in residential aged care facilities. Although studies have focused on their training and development needs when providing a palliative approach, a valid and reliable instrument to evaluate their knowledge, skills and attitudes is required. **Aims:** To examine what instruments have been used to evaluate nursing assistants' knowledge of, skills in and attitudes towards a palliative approach in residential aged care facilities, critically evaluate development processes, and discuss the strengths and limitations of existing instruments for this population.

Methods: CINAHL, the Cochrane Library, ERIC, MEDLINE, PubMed, Scopus and Web of Science were searched using key words. Selected articles were published in English in the period 2004–2014 and included instruments which evaluated nursing assistants and a palliative approach.

Results: Ten studies using seven instruments met the inclusion criteria. One of these instruments measured nursing assistants' level of comfort in providing end-of-life care. The six remaining instruments measured palliative care knowledge, palliative care practice, self-efficacy, knowledge and attitudes towards people with advanced dementia, beliefs and attitudes to death, dying, palliative and interdisciplinary care across the aged care workforce.

Conclusion: Seven instruments have been used to evaluate nursing assistants' knowledge, skills and attitudes in a palliative approach. Instrument design and recommended psychometric processes for development limit specificity and usefulness of these instruments for nursing assistants' scope of practice. Adhering to recommended psychometric processes will increase the validity and reliability of an instrument tailored to this population and a palliative approach.

© 2015 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

Background

Older people entering residential aged care facilities (RACFs), known formerly as nursing homes and hostels in Australia, have complex health and care needs. While death is not necessarily imminent, many older people who require permanent placement in RACFs have palliative care needs on admission due to the longer dying trajectories associated with chronic diseases and frailty (World Health Organisation, 2004). A palliative approach is a recognised framework to enhance older peoples' quality of life as they approach the end of life (Australian Department of Health and Ageing, 2006; Cooper and Glaetzer, 2004; Hegarty and Currow, 2006). All aged care staff who have undertaken relevant education and training are required to provide care with a palliative approach (Australian Department of Health and Ageing, 2006). Initiatives in education and training for the aged care workforce have been the focus of

national strategies to improve the quality of care of older people with palliative care needs living and dying in RACFs (Australian Department of Health and Ageing, 2006; Department of Health, 2008; Froggatt and Reitingger, 2013; University of Queensland/Blue Care Research and Practice Development Centre, 2012).

Nursing assistants are the largest aged care workforce providing most direct care to older people in RACFs (Beck et al., 2012; Ersek et al., 2005; Lerner et al., 2010; Nochomovitz et al., 2010; Waskiewich et al., 2012; Winchester, 2003). In Australia, the number of nursing assistants has steadily increased across the aged care sector (King et al., 2012). Of the 147,000 direct care workers employed in RACFs in the 2012 workforce survey, 68% (n = 64,669) were nursing assistants compared to 14% (13,939) RNs and 11% (n = 10,999) ENs (King et al., 2012).

While there is variation across countries in the education, training and qualifications obtained, nursing assistants generally possess basic vocational qualifications and the shortest training (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013; Department of Health, 2008; Productivity Commission, 2011). A systematic review of the literature conducted by Frey et al. (2011) concluded that no validated instrument exists to measure

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +61 2 4734 2741; fax: +61 2 4734 2330.

E-mail addresses: sara_karacsony@yahoo.com.au (S. Karacsony), e.chang@uws.edu.au (E. Chang), amanda.johnson@uws.edu.au (A. Johnson), a.good@uws.edu.au (A. Good), m.edenborough@uws.edu.au (M. Edenborough).

perceived competence in palliative care of generalist providers into which group aged care staff fall. Additionally, instruments used to evaluate health care professionals and non-professionals need further scrutiny, especially as the emphasis on physical symptom management identified as the focus in many of the existing instruments (Frey et al., 2011) is beyond the scope of nursing assistants' practice. While the gap in measurement tools for nursing home staff as a whole impedes the evaluation of palliative care processes (Thompson et al., 2011), determining nursing assistants' level of preparedness to provide care with a palliative approach is particularly important in light of their level of involvement in care processes. Given the differences in education between nursing assistants and tertiary-educated registered nurses, a valid and reliable measurement tool suitable for nursing assistants' scope of practice is warranted. Instruments that are psychometrically sound for construct, translational and criterion validity with reliability testing to examine stability and equivalence strengthen study findings (DeVon et al., 2007).

Aims

The aims of this literature review are to 1. examine what instruments have been used to evaluate nursing assistants' knowledge, skills and attitudes in a palliative approach in RACFs, 2. critically examine the development and psychometric processes of existing instruments, and 3. discuss the strengths and limitations of these instruments for nursing assistants' scope of practice.

Review Methods

The search strategy was conducted using the databases of the Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature (CINAHL) Plus with Full text, the Cochrane Library, MEDLINE without Revisions 1996 to the present, PubMed, Scopus and Web of Science. Keywords used in the search are presented in Table 1. MeSH (Medical Subject Headings) keywords were used in databases where available. Articles were restricted to those published in English between 2004 until June 2014 as this timeframe incorporates the educational and training initiatives for the aged care workforce in the residential aged care setting (Australian Department of Health and Ageing, 2006; Department of Health, 2008). In addition, relevant references from bibliographies were examined.

All references from the search strategy were imported into EndNoteVersion 4 software. Duplicate references (n = 219) were removed and the title and abstract of the remaining studies were evaluated against the inclusion criteria.

Inclusion Criteria

Literature selected for review had to include use of an instrument to assess nursing assistants' knowledge of, skills in or attitudes towards a palliative approach. Both qualitative and quantitative studies were eligible for inclusion. There are few studies that focus specifically on nursing assistants; studies with mixed samples from which nursing assistant data could be extrapolated were also included.

Table 1
Terms used in the initial search strategy.

| Terms for nursing assistants and | Terms for a palliative approach and | Terms for tools |
|---|---|---|
| All combined with or (MM nursing assistants) Care assistants OR care staff OR care workers (MM nursing home personnel/ nursing home employees) Personal care workers | All combined with or MM palliative care MM terminal care End of life Death and dying | Measure Instruments Tools (evaluation) Questionnaire |

Exclusion Criteria

The majority of articles retrieved were excluded (n = 289) as they did not relate to the specific aims of the search strategy. Studies in which instruments were used to measure individual palliative care frameworks or training programmes were excluded.

Results

The search strategy initially identified 517 articles. These articles were reviewed by title and abstract for content related to the inclusion criteria. After exclusion, a total of ten articles referring to seven instruments met the inclusion criteria and are included in this review. Fig. 1 provides a flow chart of the included literature. Research articles that met the inclusion criteria were then read in full. Details are provided in Table 2. Instruments used in the research studies were examined for development, structure and psychometric properties.

Overview of Instruments

Seven instruments were identified in the literature search. Two instruments were developed in Canada (Leclerc et al., 2014; Ross et al., 1996), three were developed in the USA (Long et al., 2012; Nochomovitz et al., 2010), one instrument was developed and validated, in part, in Australia (Eager et al., 2003; Phillips et al., 2011); one instrument was developed in Germany (Pfister et al., 2013). Four of these instruments used existing measures modified to enhance applicability (Eager et al., 2003; Leclerc et al., 2014; Long et al., 2012; Pfister et al., 2011b). Two instruments were based on end-of-life and palliative care education programmes and use of the literature (Nochomovitz et al., 2010; Ross et al., 1996).

The Palliative Care Quiz for Nurses (PCQN)

The PCQN is a validated instrument which was developed by Ross, MacDonald and McGuiness in 1996 in Canada to measure nurses' knowledge of palliative care. The quiz was developed with qualified nurses and undergraduate nursing students with the aim of testing knowledge, stimulating discussion and identifying misconceptions about palliative care nursing. The PCQN has been used to evaluate nursing assistants' knowledge of palliative care in several studies (Ford and

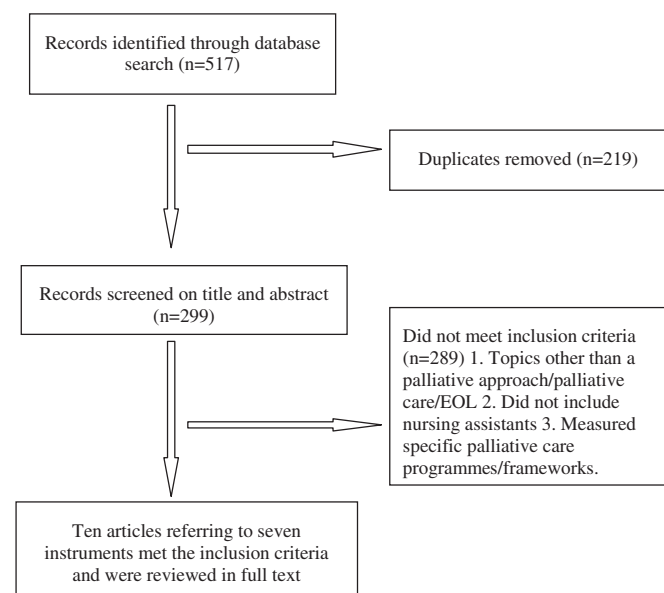


Fig. 1. Flow chart of included studies.

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/367943>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/367943>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)