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The emotional effects caused on an elderly person by the transition into care

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Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Bachelor of Arts degree (Social Science Specialization) at DBS School of Arts, Dublin.

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Abstract

This thesis will investigate the emotional effects caused on an elderly person with the transition into care. The study was carried out by using Qualitative Analysis which involved interviews each participant in relation to the emotional effects caused on an elderly person by the transition into care. The study investigates the different perspectives and experiences the participants have when it comes to the move into care. The common themes that were researched were the importance of person centred care, care plan, activities, and staff relationships on the lives of the elderly during the move into care. The results of the study showed participants to all find through one or more of the common themes. The study showed these common themes were the biggest influence in helping a resident with the move to this nursing home and the importance of their relationships with residents and family.

Aims of Present Study

As this study is based on the elderly and the transitional stages in an elderly persons life the emotional effects on an elderly person in the transition into a nursing home from the service providers perspective. The study will be carried out by using Qualitative Analysis which will involve interviewing each participant in relation to their experiences of working with the elderly. What this study intends to investigate is the different views and perspectives the participants have towards the main theme of the transitional stage into care on an elderly person. From the researching of this topic that the transitional period seems to be the most difficult time for a person when it comes to moving from home into a nursing home or hospital. Another important factor in this research is does in time do the feelings of being in a nursing home change for the elderly. There are other issues that are important to people in nursing homes such as that of family relationships, care plan, activities, and staff relationships on the lives of the elderly participants. What this research project is about is the emotional effects of the move into a nursing home or hospital can have on an elderly person. The participants involved will be service providers such as nurses and care assistants who have witnessed first-hand the emotional affect this transition has on an elderly person. The aim of this research is to get a service providers knowledge, feelings and experiences when it comes to this topic. The purpose is to find out why there is such a strong emotional connection to the move into care, how from their point of view do most elderly people cope with this move. What do they feel is necessary for caring for an elderly person through this transitional stage into care? What are the rational reactions when an elderly person moves from their home to full time care?

Introduction and Background

This literature review will explore different reports on the elderly such as the role and future developments of the nursing homes in Ireland and meeting the health, social care and welfare services information needs of older people in Ireland (National Council on Ageing and Older People) (NCAOP) because each one explains which is relevant to this study because it helps establish a firm knowledge surrounding nursing homes from these literature reviews so there relevancy to this review will be discussed later.

Social Policy

Social policy is very important when it comes to older people especially as it can influence their life for the future years ahead. So before carrying out the research to find out about the transition into care it was important to research about social policy as it plays a major role when it comes to the elderly. In a society such as Irelands the elderly make up an important group of people. So therefore social policy is an important factor in relation to the elderly (Quinn et al, 2005; 206). Convery (1987) reported that a weakness in the long term care system had been that 'day services' for older people had not been developed. About a year later, *The Years Ahead report* (1988) was published, its aim was to allow older people to live at home and when this was no longer possible, to receive care as near as possible to their home. This report followed on from the *Care of the Aged* report, which was published in 1968, "That it is better and probably much cheaper, to help the aged to live in the community than to provide for them in hospitals or other institutions' (Cited in *The Years Ahead*, 1988, Ch.1). The complex event of ageism was presented in the 1960s through Butler (1975) with its 'working definition' being specified as 'a set of beliefs originating in the biological variation between people and relating to the aging processes.' (Quinn et al, page 206) The policy planning report *The Years Ahead* (1998) did encourage that with old age it demands

our respect and that when the elderly are admitted to long term care settings as a final option they should receive a high standard of care also receive respect.

The Elderly Population

As we have seen over the past decades that our elderly population here in Ireland has grown. Therefore it was important include facts from the (National Council on Ageing and Older People). With such an increase in the population of the elderly there will be no doubt a necessary need for the different services necessary for the elderly. And it is important to note that in the past few years especially the past two decades that there has been a big change when it comes to the care of the elderly as it has moved from home to nursing homes. The average life expectancy has risen here in Ireland over the past few years. Therefore like many other European countries Ireland's society is also aging (National Council on Ageing and Older People 2003) (NCAOP). In the mid 1990's, 11% of the population was over 65 years (14 % > 65 in the western Health Board). By 2030 this figure will rise to around twenty per cent of the population (Department of Health and Children, 2001). Leahy and Wiley (1998) have edited *The Irish Health System in the 21st Century* that includes a chapter about the population ageing, so it shows that the health care needs of the older population is viewed with great importance. This is due to the current demographic trend, which will mean that Ireland will have increasing numbers of older people in the early 21st Century. Leahy and Wiley (1998 p186) proposes that after 2006 there is to be a rapid growth in the population of elderly people. This growth will continue to give rise to further demands for services. This is relevant here as it shows why more elderly people are looking for care. From the figures in the NHI (Nursing Homes Ireland), since 2002 there has been an increase of 7.3 per cent of people who are over the age of 65 and by 2025 is also likely to increase to over 800,000. In Europe the life expectancy is 75.1 years for men and 81.4 for women. The life expectancy over the past ten years has increased by 2.5 years in Europe. In Ireland the life expectancy is

higher again the life expectancy of a Irish man was 77 years of age and of an Irish woman was 82 years of age. According to Central Statistics Office, life expectancy is increasing in Ireland and now exceeds the European Union average (2005). According to the Nursing Home act 1990, is an institution for the care and maintenance of more than two dependent persons, a nursing home, according to the Nursing Home act 1990, is an institution for the care and maintenance of more than two dependent persons.

For many older people, moving to a nursing home is essential. This move can lead to strong emotional reactions that can affect the older people, especially those suffering from mental impairment. Many find it stressful to be moved from their home to new surrounding that they are not familiar with. After the transitional experience for the older person, the nursing home now becomes their home. So when doing this literature review some research was found that was done by the Health Service Executive in 2010 that showed that even when the older person goes on short visit to family member they will be keen to return 'home', as the nursing home provides them with security and comfort. But it also showed the opposite to this as some elderly people who are living in a nursing home for years are still not happy there and do not feel that the nursing home is their home. It is these patients who provide challenges for the nursing staff. From some research done by the HSE (2010) research the main factors which help ease the transition from their home into a nursing home for the elderly are family visits, religion, good social interactions with staff and keeping active. Visits by family members were very important to residents in care. This sort of information will be of great value for the research study.

Development of Information

In this review, the role and future development of nursing homes in Ireland that was researched (NCAOP) (1991) It is linked to the previous review because discusses nursing

homes but on the cost and also the quality of caring for elderly persons in different locations. The discovery made here when this research was conducted was there is a great need for information about nursing homes. Another discovery was is it better for an elderly person to be cared for within the community or in a nursing home, which is similar to the topic being researched in. All the evidence points to the present inadequacies of that system, at least as currently financed and structured. The author states that our knowledge of costs and quality is quite low especially when it comes to nursing homes. From the survey carried out it showed that almost three quarter of the residents in care are of at least the age of 75 and are likely to remain in care. It put emphases on why more information is needed.

The Transition

With an ageing population there is more information and studies on different transitions that one takes once they reach a certain age from the (National Council on Ageing and Older People, meeting the health, social care and welfare services information needs of older people in Ireland) the study firstly talks about retirement age and reaching the stage of pension age this review is a great source of information as it connects the different stages of life of an elderly person that eventually links them in some cases to a nursing home. What this study discovered, that there is a transition which leads to the start of illness or disability with this transition leads to the gathering of the different information that an elderly person may need such as medical advice, what to do in emergency situations, further supports to name a few. Then there is transition three which was the most relevant for this literature review which is the transition from the home into care. When someone reaches this stage there is different information during this time the general information like objective information on nursing homes, how to apply for a nursing home, which also includes costs and other important factors, advice on money management when it comes to moving into long term care. There is other information on standards and conditions like the information on policies and practices

of different nursing homes and how visiting works for families. What this author is trying to show is from these events in life such as retirement, falling ill or disability, moving from home to care and loss may occur on a given day. Each of these events is happening as a transition they do not happen as one event but over time. It is a difficult emotional time for many older people they would prefer to remain at home for as long as long as they can. In Ireland the current government policy states that it is a better option for an elderly person to remain in their own home and getting the details advice on finances, aids for independent living, but when the time comes for an older person to move from their home into care this can happen for a number of reasons firstly an older person may become physically or mentally ill and families feel they are unable to care for him or her themselves is an issue that this author is pointing out for this review. When someone reaches the stage where they have to move to a nursing home for care this is due to the fact that there is finally a need of a higher level of care. Nursing homes, can be run by voluntary groups or either private individuals and the local health board, are all available. So when it comes to relocation it is a process as you are moving someone from their home so the outcome of this move is influenced by different factors firstly you will have to take into consideration the physical and mental health of the older person and the choice this person has made as well as the environmental change that is occurring for them. (Davies, 1996). This is a process that can be thought to consist of the following four stages which would be the pre move decision and preparation process, the actual move, then for the first three to six months would be known as the immediate post move phase and then finally the long term care.

The Pre-move Phase

This study also discovered was what the pre-move or preparation phase includes is to take into account the older person's information such as their environmental needs as well as their emotional needs which will be important in the research that will be carried out. With the pre

move stage a person can familiarise themselves with the nursing home to get used to the new environment and most importantly meet the staff. As if it is someone with dementia the relocation will take more time to prepare for the move as well as other support necessary for the move. From doing this literature review some findings were made that some nursing homes would provide a trial period for a few months to see will the older person benefit from the move. Also that poor adjustment from the move can lead to emotional distress for the elderly person and maybe the move was involuntary. From (NCAOP, p76) showed the importance of service providers knowledge and skills to provide adequate support for not only the older person who is a resident. It also provides support for the families as this is a big change and can in some cases be due to the losing their homes which can set of a feeling of loss which can happen during the pre-move phase.

Before making these decisions people will require advice especially financial, medical, social and psychological. If there is a wrong decision it could have long-term costs for the older person's physical, psychological and social health. Before making the decision the older person and his or her family should discuss the different options with experts who can give them the appropriate information and guidance before making their decision. Another important issue to take into account is which nursing home to choose is the cost of the home and what the facilities are like in the nursing home also if the older person falls ill what services are there, will they remain there if they are ill. This is extremely important to an elderly person. This review was able to explain the different stages that need to happen before an elderly person makes the transition into care. In all the (NCAOP, 2002) has stated the key transition points in later life are important they include the move from home, the onset of illness or disability and bereavement. What connects them all is loss. From a move a person will leave memories, emotional connections from a place behind as well as the home itself. Therefore, moving from home can have consequences for self-esteem and personal

happiness. So though there are positives there are also negatives from moving from the home the positives being health care and help being available all night and day so takes pressure off the family knowing that the older person is in a safe environment. A negative is when an older person moves into care from a home they often feel they lose a connection from their community and friends so there is a personal loss for them as well especially if they are in a nursing home that has no connections to their past. Over all this review was able to establish different transitions and affects it has on an elderly person. Social policy and information on the elderly were necessary for this review as they provide the background information when it comes to researching the elderly.

Methodology

The research method that was used for this study was qualitative. The main reason for choosing qualitative was due to the study aiming on the transition into care for an elderly person from the service provider's perspective.

Apparatus

All interviews were carried out using a tape recorder. The tape recorder was the most suitable and useful way of getting the data necessary for this research study. By using a tape recorder it made sure that the data collected was understood correctly and therefore transmitted efficiently. Notes were also used through the duration of the interviews.

Participants

The participants involved in this research were both male and female. The participants included one male and six females. As confidentiality was agreed before interviewing took place participants interviews will be categorized using letters (Interviews A-G). When first approaching the participants it was done through informal contact. In accessing the sample it will be necessary to contact the head director of the local nursing home before and asked for permission to interview her and six other members of staff. This was done before contacting and arranging a suitable time to interview each participant. As there was one male participant chosen it allowed for a varied response in connection to the research topic, therefore preventing any possible gender bias. As there was no specific age profile participants age varied from thirty to fifty five. The participants have worked with the elderly for a minimum of two years and have established their different experiences from working directly with the elderly before the research was conducted each participant was given a briefing of what the interview layout was and shown the twenty questions that were included in the interview.

Confidentiality was agreed before the research was conducted as some participants were worried about this issue.

Design

It is data led research so that is why qualitative research methods were chosen because it produces data rich material. The interviews were semi structured and will be conducted with open ended questions as every participant will have different views and feelings in relation to this topic of the emotional affect this move has on an elderly person.

Procedure

The study aim is to get a service providers knowledge, feelings and experiences when it comes to this topic. The purpose is to find out why there is such a strong emotional connection to the move into care, how from their point of view do most elderly people cope with this move. What do they feel is necessary for caring for an elderly person through this transitional stage into care? What are the rational reactions when an elderly person moves from their home to full time care?

All interviews were conducted in the Nursing home due to the fact that seven participants is all that was able to take part in the interviews as each participating had to have another member of staff covering for them for the time they were being interviewed. Each participant was given a briefing in detail of what the interview layout was and shown the twenty questions that were included in the interview. Each interview had met the interviewer before the interview so there was already an informal relationship developed. Before the interview was conducted on the date arranged each participant was asked to sign a confidentiality form and these were also collected before any of the interviews started. All participants were

informed that the interviewed could be stopped at any time if they needed too. In order to carry out the interviews all participants were interviewed separately as to give them their own privacy also for confidentiality reasons. Each interview was recorded using a Dictaphone because this was able to accurately collect the data needed. All participants were each asked the same 20 questions firstly as it gives each participant a fair and equal opportunity. The interviews were conducted in a quiet and suitable environment. A room that participants felt comfortable in and were approximately thirty minutes long each. As it is a data led research the interviews will be conducted with open ended questions as every participant will have different views and feelings in relation to this topic of the emotional affect this move has on an elderly person.

The main topics that were included in all interviews were

1. Activities
2. Importance of Relationships with Staff
3. Care Plan
4. Family visits

Limitations

There were some limitations while conducting this study. As the assistant director of nursing choose all the participants. As the nursing home was relatively small there was only a certain number of staff available to be interviewed as while one participant was being interviewed there needed to be cover for this person at the nursing home for the duration of the interview. The majority working there were women therefore only one male participant was available.

Ethical Concerns

In carrying out this research study, ethical concerns occurred for the participants.

Firstly a letter of introduction for the department of social science will be necessary from a supervisor as consent will be needed before contacting the participants. As understandable all participants worried about who may have access to the interviews that were conducted due to personal information that could be attached to the interviews once they were done. Therefore before conducting any interviews all confidentiality forms were previously signed by the researcher, this then informed all participants that the recordings from the interviews were being used for research purposes only and that in no circumstances would copies of the interviews be made or would the interviews be passed on. All the confidentiality forms contained information showing that the nursing homes will not be mentioned in the study, also all participants will be labelled using letters(A-G). As mentioned before they will be given briefing of what the interview they are part-taking in is about and allowing them to express their experience and perspectives on the emotional effects caused on an elderly person by the transition into care. The Appendix section of this study contains a copy of the confidentiality form. Another important issue is to promise and guarantee full confidentiality of participants, also explain and maintain that they have the right to withdraw at any time.

Data Analysis

Thematic Analysis will be used to analyse the research gathered as it is a 'method for identifying, analysis, and reporting themes within data' (Braun and Clarke, 2006; 79). As thematic Analysis (TA) is the chosen research method due to the researcher having little experience in this area and TA is quite easy to learn making it an easy method to use in analysing this study. The researcher can recover rich and detailed data by using TA which is

a key advantage. It is relatively easy to produce thematic analysis as the method for using TA is visibly drawn out in a step by step process (Braun and Clarke, 2006). TA is the basic form of Qualitative Analysis. The method of TA is used in this study as identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns within data which will be important for this research as it is narrative evidence. It will help in the reporting of experiences, meanings and perspectives. These are important to this research as the experience of the participants is important to answering the research question. As the way participants respond to the questions will help guide the analyses (Braun and Clarke, 2006; 81). Coding is the main process that is involved in TA. A code is important to this research as it identifies the different areas of data that the analyser finds interesting which will then be arranged into important groups. The use of thematic analysis allows for themes to be pulled together which are seen as having significant meaning and the important experiences for participants. These themes have been organised into the following headings, care plans, person-centred care, staff relationships and activities.

Results Section

It will be in this section that the results of the study will be analysed. It is crucial to mention that some participants have worked with older persons for a longer period of time than others but all experiences are significant and hold great knowledge about an older person and the transition into care. In the process of conducting the interviews the researcher noted that their;

1. Activities
2. Staff relationships
3. Person centred care
4. Care plans

Were common themes throughout the participants' replies about their experience from working with an older person in the nursing home? The aim of this research is to get a service providers knowledge, feelings and experiences when it comes to this topic. The purpose is to find out why there is such a strong emotional connection to the move into care, how from their point of view do most elderly people cope with this move. What do they feel is necessary for caring for an elderly person through this transitional stage into care? What are the rational reactions when an elderly person moves from their home to full time care?

Most of the participants described their experiences with working with an older person good that caring for an elderly person involves good relationship that involves getting to know the individual. ***“Well really first of all getting to know them is the most important part of when they first come in”***. Participants have also expressed that person centred care is the way forward with the move into full time care. ***“Nursing homes today are person centred so it is all about meeting their expectations of what they like rather than just getting them to fit***

into a routine because of person centeredness it is about their choices and what they choose to do which is important in how they cope when they come here”.

Activities

During the interviews the research found that as part of the participant’s daily routine the occupational therapist visits them in the Day Centre to do activities with them. They are helpful not only in their daily routine but also for helping them to settle in. As all participants agreed that they are helpful with the transition. *“Yes we do find these activities help them forget about feeling alone and meeting other residents does help them settle in”*. Not only did the research discover that it helped older people settle in by meeting other residents but that they are doing something they enjoy and that they are taking part in something they are familiar with. All participants expressed how they encourage them to take part in all activities. *“We do of course encourage them to take part in any activities we do off course find out what they are interested in when they are in admission”*. As participant B agrees with activities helping residents settle in because of the big move it can be difficult for them to settle so these activities allow them to meet other residents who share similar interests. *“So if they are not feeling comfortable in their own ward, they might meet people who share similar interests”*. Participant C also believed they were helpful for those settling in. *“they can be a good ice breaker”*. Yet it is important issue that came up over the interview process was family involvement in activities especially for the newer residents. *“They can bring family members down with them as well especially those going down for the first time”*. From the interviews family participation in activities with residents is quite helpful for their time in the nursing home as participant E reflects that activities are enjoyable for everyone involved. *“We do encourage residents’ families to go and join in the activities as it is something fun they can do together”*. In the opinion of many of the participants they found activities help residents from feeling alone as participant E agrees with this *“In my opinion*

for residents settling in, for most they do help because for anyone it can be very easy for them to keep to themselves and they can become lonely or isolated but with activities they are meeting other residents and starting to make new friends...”

The participation in these activities is optional and according to the interviewees not all residents want to take part. As all residents have their likes and dislikes which is discovered in their assessment before their admission. *“Yea what we do is an assessment first so we know from that their likes and dislikes”*. So from an assessment it helps staff plan each residents’ activity into their daily routine which participant G agrees with. *“When we know there is something they like and enjoy doing we will allocate time so they can do it we are flexible that way”*. Another discovery that was found through participants interviews was the importance these activities play in the residents life from their experience they are crucial for settling in and responsible for whether or not they want to take part in a activity or not it gives them control over this area of their life. *“Yes it becomes an important part of their routine, it gives them a sense of ownership over whether they would like to do or what not”*. Another key issue is meeting people *“It is great for socialisation, getting into the social network here and making them feel a part of a group really helps them settle in”*. Activities throughout the interviews was a common trait that from participants experience are essential for an older person coping with a transition due to the freedom it gives whether it is music, baking or art in some cases a new interest. *“We know their different interest and what they enjoy doing like we have different bowling teams and some residents never bowled before in their life it is a new interest they enjoy”*. From the participants experience from working with an older person in care they all expressed the need to keep the connection with the person they were or the lifestyle they had before they moved into care as it could be the simple things like going for walks, gardening or even reading the newspaper to keep up to date on everything makes a difference with settling in *“We have a safe garden but they enjoy*

going for walks together and out in the garden things like that really do help". Even participant A agrees "*Even little things like getting their daily post every day and trips to places of their interest*". Keeping the connection with their life before care is important in helping them cope so activities are a way of doing this.

Importance of Relationships with Staff

Each participant believed from their experience whether they have been working in the nursing home two years to twenty seven years that they have all formed very close relationships with the residents in their care. All participants felt they had a good relationship with residents. That it is such an important and necessary connection in caring for an older person in care. "*Yes it is really important. People feel more comfortable when they know someone will look after them*". All participants mentioned how important these relationships are in making a new resident feel at home. "*Because we need to know what they like and don't like so it is important in caring for a resident and making them feel more at home*". Participant A described how these relationships become like a bond which is necessary for their care "*We do become like their family, we are their advocates, their friends and for some residents they rely on us more than their own families*". Participant C agrees with this "*Like I believe you need to build a trusting relationship the minute a new resident comes because you need that mutual respect*". All participants agreed that the relationship with residents is important for their care as knowledge of their background and what kind of person they are, their likes and dislikes "*We like to communicate a lot with them to find out what they like and what they do not like you are with these people every day so you become like a family*" though participant F agrees that the relationship with residents is important for their stay but that the relationship with families is extremely important as from working with family and bringing them into the discussion of the treatment plan for their family member who is a resident in the nursing home "*Family members are a big tool and support for the*

staff in terms of giving background information in terms of visits we try to discuss with them about care plans and treatment plans you know”. Participant D agrees with how important building a relationship with family dictates their care *“Our relationship with families is really important too because we get to know a resident better through talking to families it is helpful in finding out their usual routines”*.

Another issue that arose through the interviews with participants is trust between both them and the resident they are caring for *“In terms of relationship with a resident, it is a key role to their future if you start on the wrong foot it can end up that way so you need to build that trusting bond.”* Other participants agree that creating a trusting relationship is everything. *“Yes completely the staff relationship with residents dictates their stay here”*.

Person centred care

An issue that was commonly brought up in the interviews was that of person centred care. This topic describes how staffs in a long term care setting try to make sure that the residents live their lives according to them and what they like or what they do not like. *“What we are trying to do here is to develop a more person-centred approach rather than a particular routine but for some older residents they like a routine having their breakfast at a certain time or when they go for walks and certain things like that especially what time family visits”*. This was mentioned at same stage in all interviews as person centred care is a policy from which all service providers work by, which seems to have its benefits for the residents involved according to participant D. *“The introduction of person centred care would you say is the law of the land so there is expectations on us to meet the care of residents and their choices of what they would like to do.”* This policy is how nursing home operates now unlike older ways of the institutionalised care. *“With the older residents who have been here in the older system would have felt that they were in an institutional setting so sadly*

because of that they get very uncomfortable if they try moving them outside that routine.”

From participant D experience with person centred care newer residents feel more at home with the new policies in place than older residents who may of first come to the nursing home years ago when it was a more institutionalised setting which according to participant F can still be a problem today *“Whether we like it or not will still carry the stigma of being institutionalised so try to make it as homely as possible staff work very hard to achieve that easy move”*.

When it comes to the issue of empowerment, policies have been put in place to make sure that residents are able to take part in meaningful social interactions as participants mention how people lose some control of their lives. As these policies like person centred care help residents have more choice and control in their lives which is what participant B expressed *“Person centre care is important here like you need to have a routine to run a nursing home but you need to make sure that people here as a resident make their own choices on what they like if they do not want to get up until we leave them in bed until then. We base our routine around the individuals”*. In meeting the best quality of care for each resident they expressed how an assessment is important for making sure that staff can learn what is necessary for meeting the needs of a resident before they come so they receive the proper care. *“What we do is an assessment first so from that we know their likes and dislikes”*.

Participant E agreed with this topic as she mentions *“the assessment at home is important; we like to know about their home and their likes and dislikes. Planning is necessary of course”*. Person centred care is necessary for those who have dementia or suffering from cognitive impairment as this theme arose from the interviews as people have different types of cognitive impairment. *“It would take a week long process as it is not a familiar environment and those with dementia and cognitive impairment often forget that they are here in the nursing home”*

Care plan

Care plan is decided from the assessment when a resident is coming into care. It is here where the visiting plan would be discussed as family visits are important for residents, as keeping a good connection with family is important. Visits from friends and neighbours are especially good in keeping the connection with their community when they do move to full time care.

Participant E. *“From my experience when families do not visit a resident can start to feel abandoned or forgotten like older residents here who have been here for quite a while may not have any visitors and this is really sad because some may be forgotten about..”*. Other participants agreed with this theme that visits are helpful and they are from their experience most families are good as participant A felt *“When it comes to family visits it really depends on the individual like 80 per cent of residents will have visits weekly”*. Though another issue that appeared was with the first week being the most difficult were family visits helpful.

“Well at the beginning we would suggest less contact just because there is a great deal of unsettled emotions from both resident and their families because some do feel guilty and get upset”. Though participant E believed that it depends on the residents’ situation. *“They are coming from if they are coming from home yes I think they are upsetting though as I mentioned before that we do try make their space as homely as possible the first week can be quite difficult especially depending on their cognitive ability”*. Participant B agreed with this point *“It depends sometimes with the dementia residents they can’t be that helpful. Sometimes we discourage them in the first week depending on how they react”*. As in some cases according to participant C families may be needed in the first week depending on how the individual is settling in. *“We ask families to ring and see how they are settling in and getting used to the environment but sometimes residents are getting upset so we ring them because they are a bit upset and missing them”*.

Therefore a way to find a balance between visits and settling in was found when the issue of treatment plan arose with participant F. ***“We then build up the visits according to how the resident is settling in but this is all organised between us the resident and of course families when discussing their treatment plan”***. Family visits was a theme that all participants felt were important to all residents ***“Part of the personal care plan we would try to facilitate that as much as possible because it is their home so you want to try your best in helping them.”*** which participant F similarly explained that it is important to find a balance for each individual who is a resident in the nursing home ***“Because it is very individualised you need to find a balance between when they want visitors and when they want to go meet other residents and do activities”***. When the issue of residents not having visitors can lead to a negative experience ***“I think their helpful because if they don’t visit they can feel abandoned or forgotten about”***. Another issue that was brought up in the interviews was when the resident’s family can take them home for a day. When it was suitable for the resident could it be arranged into care plan which it can as participant D explained ***“Some residents went home for Christmas and families are able to take them out for weekends which of course they enjoy”***.

From this study it discovered a range of different experiences when it came to helping an older person make the move into care and care plan seemed to be an important factor in that but a issue that was not widely discussed was what happens when a person does not want to settle in or is not able to adapt to being in a residential home. As participant A mentioned that ***“Others may never settle in just really insisting on going home.”*** What this participant was discussing that some older residents have never adapted to being in care. Though it is obvious that staff meet their physical needs it is their emotional needs that are more difficult to help when an older person is struggling to cope with the move. Though participants have discussed getting to know them on a personal level they still cannot fill the gap many of these

residents feel when they do not want to be in care. As from participant F experience ***“Many tell us that they have a spouse or a family that can look after them”***. When activities, person centred care, family visits are not helping what is happening to that older person then as participant D described ***“It will never be like their home though we try and personalise every body’s bed space individually.”*** Though not as common anymore because of the changes in care settings there is still an issue of older residents never settling in and though some may leave others do not have that opportunity as they may not have family to care for them. There are two sides to this as discussed before is the benefit of care for those who settle in and find it homely and for those who do not settle in and the struggle to adapt with this new environment. As the study is about how an older person copes with the move into care it was an important factor to mention.

Discussion

The section will be used to examine and analysis the findings of the study. It will then draw conclusions building from what has been learned through doing this research study.

As this study is based on the elderly and the transitional stages in an elderly persons life the emotional effects on an elderly person in the transition into a nursing home from the service providers perspective. The aim for this research was to get a service providers knowledge, feelings and experiences when it came to this topic. The purpose was to find out why there is such a strong emotional connection to the move into care, how from their point of view do most elderly people cope with this move. From the research Most of the participants described their experiences with working with an older person good that caring for an elderly person involves good relationship that involves getting to know the individual. From (NCAOP, p76) showed the importance of service providers knowledge and skills to provide adequate support for not only the older person who is a resident. It also provides support for the families.

The HSE (2010) research the main factors which help ease the transition from their home into a nursing home for the elderly are family visits, religion, good interactions with staff and keeping active. These different themes were researched in the study and shown to be true from many of the participants' experiences. Yet a further discovery was made that also aids the transition into care and that is a suitable Care plan and Person centred care. Everybody wants to have and keep their independence and this is no different for an elderly person in care. Having a sense of independence is crucial element to an older person therefore making it a priority among staff to make sure that all residents have choice and control while they are here in the nursing home. Participants have expressed that all residents from their experience hold their connection with their family, friends and community of great value. From this

study participants felt that the transition stage is when residents need the greatest help in maintaining these roles as a parent grand-parent, friend and so forth.

All participants felt they had a good relationship with residents. That it is such an important and necessary connection in caring for an older person in care. Some participants even described them as family. From previous research some staff felt that due to a lack of resources they can find it difficult to meet every personal need of a resident because of this they focus on the job of caring for them and their needs and not giving enough time to get to know each resident they care for and socialise with them (Cook et al., 2009) due to this it can limit the time staff have in order to get to know residents on a personal level. This was not the case for the participants as they all felt that each member of staff and themselves have all particularly now with the introduction of person centred care have got to know residents on a personal level. As they felt that it is the most important way of helping residents settle in especially when they are in the transition stage. The relationship with families was of great importance to participants as they felt they are the connection between family and who they were before entering care so their information is vital especially when it came to the treatment plan. Not only did this study discover that residents' relationship is important but the relationship between residents is also crucial. In order to build up these relationships is often through conversation. Evidence from other studies have come to a suggestion that residents in a long term care setting will eagerly look for an opening to engage in conversation with others and they gain much satisfaction from these interactions (Cook et al., 2009). That is why the participants feel that in caring for a new resident introducing them to other residents is important for their social interactions as not only will they meet people with similar interests, from the interviews participants recalled how many of the residents are from the area so they often meet old neighbours which helps keep the connection with their community alive for them as in the transition period is when they are feeling most alone. In

the cases of residents who may suffer from restricted mobility participant discussed the different activities and social interactions that they would arrange in the ward if they were unable to go down to the other activities. The policy planning report *The Years Ahead (1998)* suggests that old age demands our respect in all ways and that when it comes to the elderly being admitted to long term care settings it is as a final option and they should receive care of the highest degree.

From the (National Council on Ageing and Older People) it discusses the different stages an older person reaches in their life. The stage that is important to this study was moving from home into full time care. This study found that there is a transition that can be the beginning of an illness or disability and this is an event that will continue over time not just for one day. It is then a difficult but an emotional time for an older person which all participants felt that the transition is the hardest period in all the time a resident will be in the nursing home. As the interviews showed from the participants it was discovered that that many residents were afraid and in some cases really did not want to go into full time care but due to health reasons they had no alternative as they were unable to care from themselves.

Although in Ireland the current government policy states that it is a better option for an elderly person to remain in their own home and getting the details advice on finances, aids for independent living, this according to the participants this is not an option for the residents in this nursing home. Firstly participants acknowledged how all their residents needed their care and their families feel they are unable to care for him or her themselves. It is not only how they care for their health physically but how they care for their mental health as there is emotional effects when it comes to moving into a nursing home according to participants you have to remember the choice for this older person to come into care as well as the

environmental change that is occurring for them (Davies, 1996). What the interviews found that the move into care sets of feelings or emotions of loss were it is losing their home, or their partner and even a pet that for them making every residents space personal is the first step in helping with the transition.

It is broke up into different stages the pre move decision and preparation process, the actual move, then for the first three to six months would be known as the immediate post move phase and then finally the long term care. It is the preparation stage that is when the participants' involvement would start as this is when the care plan is decided. This study (Davies, 1996) also discovered that the pre-move or preparation phase has to take into account the older person's information such as their environmental needs as well as their emotional needs which will be important to all participants as they all expressed how each resident is different. With the pre move stage a person can familiarise themselves with the nursing home to get used to the new environment and most importantly meet the staff. According to participants this is very important to residents with cognitive impairment as relocation can take more time so all participants agree that you would need more time to prepare for the move and organise an appropriate care plan. As cognitive impairment can come in many different forms therefore some new residents may forget they choose to move into care making it more important to have familiar items around their room so they feel they are in a safe environment. Some participants mentioned that when they see their personal items when they arrive they tend to relax and feel more comfortable.

Care plan is decided from the assessment it is here were visiting plan would be discussed here as family visits are important for residents especially in not only continuing a good connection with family but also keeping the connection with their community when they do move into full time care. According to the HSE (2010) research that family visits is one of the main factors that will help an older person with the transition into care. So key issues like

when are visitors allowed come to the nursing home, are there quiet areas where a resident can see their visitors, do children feel at home when they come visit. From the interviews visits are encouraged by all family members to come though usually after the first week as they allocate the time in the residents first week to settling in and meeting staff but overall they feel that family coming to the nursing home at any time throughout the day allows for the resident to feel more at home and more comfortable here that is why the nursing home has opening visiting times.

An issue that was commonly brought up in the interviews was that of person centred care. This topic describes how staff in a long term care setting and how they work to make sure that the residents live their lives according to them and what they like or not like. The participants expressed how person centred care is an new experience as staff in the nursing home can create a very good picture of how residents would like to live when they come to the nursing home by using different approaches like using their life story, information from family and even photo albums to enhance interaction that is a skill that the participants feel they have developed with years of working with residents in the nursing home. With person centred care newer residents feel more at home with the new policies in place than older residents who may of first come to the nursing home years ago when it was a more institutionalised setting. It was an important factor found that for those older residents that even now with the new policies, the personal care plans and activities they still do not feel at home. A study done by the Health Service Executive in 2010 that showed that even when the older person goes on short visit to family member they will be keen to return 'home', as the nursing home provides them with security and comfort. But it also showed the opposite to this as some elderly people who are living in a nursing home for years are still not happy there and do not feel that the nursing home is their home.

Being in a long term care setting can affect the normal patterns of socially interacting which is another challenge a new resident will face when coming to the nursing home. As in some care settings some residents may live beside someone for a period of time and for this while having never engaged in a significant interaction (Cook et al., 2009). Therefore without a wide range of social interactions like the activities, even group activity such as having dinner with other members of the nursing home it would be easy for a resident to become depressed and in some cases if you remove these social interactions it would take away their sense of purpose to their lives now that they are in a care setting. That is why the participants believe that having an activities co-ordinator is so important in the nursing home.

From the research activities was found to have great benefit to all residents in care according to the participants they become a part of their daily routine were the occupational therapist visits them and does activities with them. The research found that all participants agreed they helped residents with the transition. The research also discovered that it helped older people settle in by meeting other residents not only that but they are doing enjoying the activities because they are taking part in something familiar. According to the participants all the activities are optional which allows residents to make the decision in what they would like to par take in which is giving them the control which many feel they lose when they enter care. It also answered a question of how from their point of view do most elderly people cope with this move. All participants expressed the importance of encouraging residents to take part in these activities. According to the HSE (2010) report activities provide participants with an opportunity to relieve boredom and also as a form of stimulus. From the participants experience from working with an older person in care they all expressed the need to keep the connection with the person they were or lifestyle they had before they moved into care. Another important point that was discovered through the research was how important it is for family members to par take in these activities with residents especially when they first arrive.

For future research it would be recommended to acknowledge that there is a gap in the research on the transition into care from the service providers' perspective. Though there was information about the move into care there was not a wide range available. It would be recommended to find other studies on this topic that were done outside of Ireland and more information on residents who are unable to adapt to full time care.

The results of this research study have added to the previous works but at the same time also highlighting what previous studies have found on this topic.

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Appendix 1

Interview Questions

1. Hi how are you?
2. Do you mind if I ask you how you came to be working here in the nursing home?
3. How long have you been working here in the nursing home?
4. Do you believe there is a strong emotional connection to the move into care?
5. Is the transitional stage into care the most difficult for an elderly person?
6. Would many of your residents here in the nursing home be in need of full time care?
7. What do you feel is necessary for caring for an elderly person through this transitional stage into care?
8. How important is staff relationships with residents?
9. So with a resident who has dementia, would the relocation take more time to prepare as well as other support necessary for the move?
10. Do you think it is important for a person to come to the nursing home before the actual move so they can familiarise themselves with the nursing home?
11. Do you believe there is an emotional connection with the move into nursing homes due to the elderly person losing their homes?
12. So how do most elderly people cope with this move?
13. Are the first six months the most difficult for residents?
14. What are the reactions when an elderly person moves from their home to full time care?

15. When would a resident start to feel at home here in the nursing home?
16. Is routine important especially for the new resident's settling in?
17. Would ye in courage residents' to take part in the different activities that are available here?
18. Would doing these activities help them with settling in here?
19. How often do families visit residents?
20. Would these visits help residents settle in or are they upsetting for them in the first few months of the move?

Appendix 2



The emotional effects caused on an elderly person with the move into care.

My name is Siobhan Joyce and I am conducting research that explores the emotional effects caused on an elderly person by the transition into care from a service providers' perspective.

You are invited to take part in this study and participation involves an interview that will take roughly 40 minutes.

Participation is completely voluntary and so you are not obliged to take part. If you do take part and any of the questions do raise difficult feelings, you do not have to answer that question, and/or continue with the interview.

Participation is confidential. If, after the interview has been completed, you wish to have your interview removed from the study this can be accommodated up until the research study is published.

The interview, and all associated documentation, will be securely stored and stored on a password protected computer.

It is important that you understand that by completing and submitting the interview that you are consenting to participate in the study.

Should you require any further information about the research, please contact

Siobhan Joyce (Siobhanj09@gmail.com) or MR. Tom Prenderville
(tom.prenderville@dbs.ie)

Thank you for participating in this study.

Participant Signature: _____ Date: _____

