Ready to Roll? Understanding Activity, Mobility and Life Satisfaction among Residents Who Use Wheelchairs

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Background
Wheelchairs and Residential Care
Facility Factors

- Poor equipment is common.
- Can cause discomfort, poor positioning and reduced mobility.
Problems with Social Participation

- Recreational programs
- Time spent doing little or no activity.
Quality of Life for Residents

- Residents often experience boredom, loneliness and helplessness.
- There is an assumption that it is unalterably poor.
Phase 1: Exploratory Study
Goals

1. To explore what life is like for residents who use wheelchairs as their primary means of mobility.
2. To understand how wheelchairs are used by residents, families and staff.
Means

- Observations and interviews with 16 residents from two facilities
- Interviewed 10 staff
- Reviewed facility policies and procedures
Phase 2

Cross-Sectional Study
Goals

To identify factors that enabled
1. Mobility,
2. Social Activity
3. Life Satisfaction
of residents who use wheelchairs as their primary means of mobility.
Facilities

- 11 extended/multilevel care facilities in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia
  - had over 100 residents who used wheelchairs
Who We Included

- primary means of mobility
- >2 hours per day
- speak English
- > 60
- lived in facility/used a wheelchair
  >1 month
Residents

- Cognitively competent and non-competent (via proxy respondents)
- 55% took part in the study
Outcomes We Measured

Mobility (places went, how often, and how independent)

Social Participation (how often they did formal and informal activities)

Life Satisfaction
Person

- Cognition
- Depressive symptoms
- Age
- Health
- Etc.
Wheelchair Factors

- Wheelchair skills
- Type of wheelchair
- Need for seating intervention
  - Sliding, discomfort, skin ulcers etc.
- Restrained
  - Seat belt can’t be released
  - Chair can’t be propelled
Environmental Factors

- Facility Satisfaction
- Perceived barriers to participation
- Visits from friends and family
Data Collection

- Family members usually acted as proxies (67%)
Results/Discussion
Facility Results

- 100% had a least restraint policy
- 64% adopted the Eden alternative.
Participants

- @150 competent residents and 120 proxy
- Mostly female
- Mid 80s
- Manual wheelchairs
- Almost have had serious depressive symptoms
Mobility
Mobility Results

VS
Predictors of Mobility

- Wheelchair skills
- Power wheelchair
- Visits from friends and family
- Facility > physiotherapy
Participation/Life Satisfaction Results
Participation/Life Satisfaction Results

Food

Care
Predictors of Participation

- Mobility
- Depression
Predictors of Life Satisfaction

- Depression
- Facility Satisfaction
Summary
Suggestions

1. Need to address wheelchair appropriateness issues for most residents
2. Need to evaluate the use of restraints
Suggestions

3. Wheelchair skills training, increased provision of power mobility to facilitate mobility?
4. Better food
Suggestions

5. Better staffing levels generally
6. Better backfill for recreational staffing
7. Changes to the way care is delivered
8. Addressing mood problems among residents
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Questions?

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