

Nurses' perspectives on resident and family carer involvement in the medicines' pathway and medication-related decision-making

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Background Performing a medication review has shown to be an effective solution to reduce inappropriate prescribing among nursing home residents. Although shared decision-making is a key to person-centered care, no research has been done on residents' and family carers' involvement in medication decision-making, nor in the medicines' pathway as a whole. The attitude of health care professionals, including nurses, can constitute an important barrier to their involvement. Hence, their perspective on this matter should be explored.

Purpose This study aimed to investigate nurses' experiences and perceived opportunities for involvement of residents and their carers in both medication-related decision-making and the medicines' pathway as a whole.

Method A qualitative research design was used. Semi-structured interviews with 7 nurses were performed in different nursing homes across Flanders, Belgium. Audio-recordings of these interviews were transcribed ad verbatim. Subsequently, these transcripts were analyzed by means of an inductive thematic framework.

Findings Nurses named several examples of how residents and carers deal with questions and issues related to the medication, indicating a desire for information and participation among both groups. However, nurses didn't seem to acknowledge these needs. When discussing responsibilities concerning decisions about medication (changes) and the involvement of residents in the medicines' pathway, including informing them about potential medication changes, nurses indicated to rely on the GP. Nevertheless, they seemed to be involving residents and carers in the medicines' pathway themselves, mostly based on ad hoc initiatives, which in turn were dependent on the situation, resident and family carer. Furthermore, nurses expressed divergent views on current initiatives and opportunities for resident and carer involvement in the medicines' pathway, which seemed to be related to their own attitude as well as to the organization of the nursing home.

Conclusion Although information and participation needs among residents and carers could be deduced from the interviews, these are not fully acknowledged by nurses. Additionally, nurses do not involve residents and carers in the medicines' pathway in a structured manner and have diverging views on this matter, pointing towards an obvious need for initiatives to create and improve awareness.