

Palliative and End of Life Care for Older People in Care Homes: The Case of UK and Canada

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Overview. Population ageing as a global phenomenon is contributing to considerable demand for palliative and end of life care (PEoLC) provision in residential contexts. The aim of this project was to further understand PEoLC in care homes in the UK and Canada with focus on the contexts of care, resources required, needs of caregivers and residents, and solutions to issues. We used a scoping review approach to systematically identify 61 articles and present the findings here.

Sources

- Bone, A. E., Gomes, B., Etkind, S. N., Verne, J., Murtagh, F., Evans, C. J., & Higginson, I. J. (2018). What is the impact of population ageing on the future provision of end-of-life care? Population-based projections of place of death. *Palliative medicine*, 32(2), 329–336. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0269216317734435>
- Kinley J, Hockley J, Stone L, et al.(2014) The provision of care for residents dying in U.K. nursing care homes. *Age and Ageing* 43(3): 375–379. Doi: <https://doi.org/10.1093/ageing/aft158>



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This poster is part of
the SPPC Poster
Parade 2022



Building the Foundations for Future Palliative and End of Life Care

- This study was developed in recognition of the challenge of increasing populations, and the subsequent need for palliative and end of life care in residential contexts.
- As part of a larger international scan, we undertook a scoping review of British and Canadian literature.
- The consolidation of research from similar care systems – the UK and Canada - can broaden and strengthen our understanding of the issue.

Review question

What are the current palliative and end of life care needs and challenges in residential contexts in the UK and Canada?

Sub-questions:

- In what ways do services currently work well? What are the issues?
- Who do these services work well for and how?

Literature Review Process

Literature Sources: Ageline, ASSIA, CINAHL+, Cochrane, Google Scholar, ISI Web of Science, Medline, Opengrey Repository, Psychinfo, SCOPUS, Social Services Abstracts.

Search Strategy: ("Older adult*" OR Elderly OR Senior* OR frail OR aged OR "older person*") AND ("End of life" OR "end-of-life" OR palliative OR PEOlC OR EoLC OR EoL OR terminal OR degenerative) AND (residential OR hospice* OR "care home*" OR "nursing home*" OR "long-term care" OR "long-term care" OR "continuing care") AND (UK OR "United Kingdom" OR Scotland OR England OR Wales OR "Northern Ireland" OR Canada OR Britain)

Eligibility Criteria:

- i. Published within the past 10 years
- ii. Available in English
- iii. Focused on palliative and end of life care
- iv. Set in residential contexts for older people
- v. Took place in Canada or any part of the UK
- vi. Includes all types of article: Qualitative, quantitative, review articles and grey literature.

PRISMA Flow Chart: the Review Screening Process



Key Challenges and Possible Solutions to Providing Good Palliative and End of Life Care in Residential Contexts

Key Challenges:

Shortage of Resources

- Lack of staff and availability of quality time for residents and their family or caregivers
- Poorly resourced physical environments

Global Challenges

- Increasing ageing population
- Shift toward people being frailer at point of moving into residential contexts and nearer end of life

Information Insufficiency

- Staff discomfort about having death and dying discussions
- Family and caregivers unable to access information about dying, care processes and the resident they care for
- Inadequate guidance for staff about when and how to identify the end of life or initiate palliative care

Opportunities:

Ways we might prepare for an evolving long term care situation in which we recognise the increasing need for PEOC in residential contexts:

Promoting Communication – training and open discourses on the topics of death and dying, to allow staff to facilitate confident and positive interactions with residents, families and caregivers

Increasing Financial Resources – to enable staff to invest time in providing quality care; to allow residents and their families of caregivers' space, comfort and support to grieve

Supporting Accessible Advance Care Planning – for those who feel it is the right thing for them