

REVIEW PAPER

Prevalence of Care Dependency and Nursing Care Problems in Nursing Home Residents with Dementia: A Literature Review

Sandra Schüssler, MSc, RN, PhD (c)

Nursing Scientist and PhD Student at the Institute of Nursing Science, Medical University of Graz, Graz, Austria

Theo Dassen, PhD, RN

Professor, Deputy Head of the Institute of Health Sciences Education and Nursing Science, Charité - Universitätsmedizin Berlin, Berlin, Germany

Christa Lohrmann, PhD, MA, RN

Professor, Head of the Institute of Nursing Science, Medical University of Graz, Graz, Austria

Correspondence : Schüssler Sandra, Medical University of Graz Institute of Nursing Science
Billrothgasse 6, 8010 Graz, Austria. E-Mail: sandra.schuessler@medunigraz.at

Abstract

Background: Worldwide, around 35.6 million people live with dementia. This chronic condition is a risk factor in developing care dependency and nursing care problems, and often leads to nursing home admission.

Aim: The aim of this study was to conduct a literature review that provides an overview of the prevalence of care dependency and nursing care problems in nursing home residents with dementia, because such a review is missing from the international literature.

Methods: The type of narrative review was chosen and performed by doing an electronic search in PubMed, CINAHL and EMBASE and EBM Reviews via Ovid from 2003 to 2013. Furthermore, a manual search in reference lists was carried out. The literature was critically reviewed and results are presented as a narrative.

Results: The international literature indicates that 28% - 83% of residents with dementia are care dependent at the highest level. In view of the nursing care problems, the prevalence of malnutrition ranges from 14% - 56%; urinary incontinence from 39% - 59%; fecal incontinence from 43% - 87%; pressure ulcers from 7% - 47%; falls from 29% - 60%; and restraints from 10% - 60%.

Conclusions: The high prevalence of care dependency and nursing care problems in nursing home residents with dementia indicate that improvements in the management of these important quality indicators are still necessary. A suggestion for further nursing research would be to compare the prevalence of care dependency and different care problems between residents with and without dementia, and to undertake longitudinal studies to compare the development as well as the progression of the important quality indicators between residents with and without dementia, including the cognitive status of the residents.

Key words: dementia, care dependency, malnutrition, incontinence, falls, pressure ulcers, restraints, nursing homes