IN DEPTH STUDY ON NURSING HOME TRANSFERS

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ABSTRACT

The transfer of residents in nursing homes to hospitals is a common scenario all over the country. The increasing number of elderly people has turned this into one of the most important health concerns in the American society. There are several studies which have been conducted throughout the years, showing that reaching the decision for transfer is quite complicated and is often influenced by several different factors. The influencing elements that have been discovered include the medical condition, personal wish of the resident, financial status, ethical issues, as well as personal beliefs of the nursing staff and physicians. Other studies have also shown that residents did not benefit by the interventions all the time, as often expected by the resident and the family. This particular study focused on the different reasons for the need to do hospital transfers on residents staying in a privately owned and long-term facility in AB State. This quantitative study was done after a review on the medical records of residents that were transferred to a hospital facility for a frame of 12 months. The findings of the review on medical records showed results that are consistent along with other studies. While a certain physician may recommend hospital treatment, the reviewed cases has identified that residents along with their families were the main determining factor regarding the decision reached to transfer a particular resident to a different hospital facility.
In this study, the residents were generally female above 80 years old. This study also validated the fact in which a lot of the hospital transfers happened right after a resident was entered into the facility. While all of the residents included in this sample come with advanced directives on their files, most of the documents were not specific whether the resident needs hospitalization or not. This report also confirmed several findings which were published previously in previous studies throughout the years.

INTRODUCTION

The obvious increase in the number of the elderly ones has created several issues in the American society. This is something that needs to be addressed today in order to help the future. Making sure that each and every elderly person receives the necessary assistance results to leading a healthy and full life. This is one of the main concerns among many Americans these days. As the increase was caused by baby boomers turning senior citizens, the issues will gain more importance. According to a study, in the year 2011, about 20.6% of the population in the U.S or about 77 million of the so-called baby boomers will start turning 65. Also, people over the age of 80 will become the biggest part of the American population (Healthcare Quality & Research Agency, 2003). The elderly ones live in different conditions – senior housing, single family homes, living with family members, and other long-term care facilities. Elderly people who are not disabled and healthy may choose to live independently while those no require assistance for their needs daily may choose to permanently reside in long-term care settings or residential settings where assistance is given by caregivers who are
paid for the job. Most of the time, nursing homes are the best settings who need 24/7 physical care for bathing, dressing, eating, toileting and other nursing care.

Long-term care refers to the extended type of assistance often given to disabled and chronically ill individuals, while skilled long-term care is the type of care which is medically monitored and directed by health care physicians in which the insurance reimburses the facility. (Towers & Myland, 2002). Nursing home facilities exist to make sure that each of their residents lives a wonderful life in a setting that mimics their home condition, and at the same time receiving the necessary supervision and medical care. Administrators of these facilities definitely need to create and maintain a balance in between offering an environment that is safe and at the same time giving each and every resident opportunity for control, choice and individuality (Marshall & Grayson, 2003).

**LITERATURE SEARCH**

A literature search on this topic has presented different studies conducted all throughout the last 25 years and have revealed that transfers to hospitals coming from long-term care facilities have been occurring for several years and have been looked at different angles, with each aspect presenting information to the overall analysis of the existing situation. Nursing, medical, government, as well as association journals have all studied the similar issue of the residents being transferred right from nursing facilities to hospitals. The literature also explained that these transfers happened as result of a decision that is multifaceted, often influenced by physicians, resident and the family. In each of the aspects, the factors may differ and often, several other factors were involved.
Research Format and Design

The primary aim of this project is to work on identifying several factors which contribute to reaching the decision of transferring a resident from a nursing home to a hospital. It is often believed that several other factors, aside from the medical condition of a resident may influence the decision. In order to test this hypothesis out, a review of medical records will be conducted during the past 12 months. This analysis and review will not serve as an experimental exercise.

CONCLUSION

As the number of elderly residents in nursing home facilities increase, the issues involving care quality also increases. The transfer from the nursing homes may actually improve medical conditions, but studies show that this show may also be provided in long-term care facilities and that there are also side effects of hospital stays. The decision to transfer a resident from a nursing home to a hospital is influenced by many factors. However, as revealed in the findings of this study, the primary one is the resident and the family.

REFERENCES


*Emergency Medicine Portals, 34*(9), 677-678.