Do clients entering residential aged care facilities receive adequate counselling and support?

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INTRODUCTION
Entering residential aged care means losing a familiar lifestyle and possessions which often transends into grief and depression. Do this vulnerable population receive support from healthcare professionals pre, during and post transition?

METHOD
Electronic databases were searched for primary research articles from 1995-2006 and twenty articles were reviewed for methodology and continuing and to reveal a gap in the existing literature as well as adding to the current body of knowledge.

RESULTS
A majority of Residents in care facilities do not receive recognition of losses or adequate support and counselling from healthcare professionals. Most decisions to enter a residential care facility are made under the duress of limited time and ill health and are often made by those other than the client which impacts negatively upon the transition experience. The two main themes extrapolated are: 'the decision and admission experience of entering a residential aged care facility and post entry adjustment'.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NURSING PRACTICE
Transitional care units or managers and psycho-geriatricians can ease the trauma of relocation and enhance the resident's sense of control and quality of life. Developing guidelines for the multidisciplinary health care team will facilitate a consistent and smoother transition to residential aged care for the newly admitted client. Once admitted to a care facility, ongoing assessment will aid in preventing unresolved grief and depression.

REFERENCES

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