Broadening the Patient Safety Agenda to Include Safety in Long-Term Care

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Abstract
Recent patient safety literature has placed more of an emphasis on acute care than long-term care (LTC). The Canadian Patient Safety Institute, Capital Health (Edmonton), and CapitalCare (Edmonton) have collaborated to create a research and action agenda for improving resident safety in Canadian LTC settings. This collaboration resulted in the development of a background paper highlighting the current state of the science, 14 key informant interviews with stakeholders across Canada, and an invitational roundtable discussion. Findings from the key-informant interviews and roundtable discussion are described here.

Key-Informant Interviews
Participants: 14 family, frontline staff, researchers, policy makers, managers.
Method: Semi-structured telephone interviews.
Results: 12 themes were developed, see Figure 1.

Roundtable Discussion
Participants: 65 family members, frontline providers, managers, senior leaders, researchers, educators, and policy experts.
Method:
• Participants were randomly assigned to 8 groups.
• Groups identified and then reported their top 3 key issues regarding resident safety in LTC in a plenary discussion. A list of priority issues was developed.
• Groups selected a priority issue and identified the strategies needed to address these priorities, and reported these in a plenary discussion.
Results: Communication and staffing/human resources emerged as priority issues affecting safety in LTC. See Table 1.

Table 1. Key challenges of the priority issues and the strategies for improvement identified at the roundtable discussions.

Discussion & Conclusion
Research on safety in LTC is necessary to guide policy and improve quality of care. Issues requiring further inquiry include:
• Improving communication
• Staffing/human resources
• Aggressive resident behaviours
• Innovative methods to nurture the balance between safety and quality of life among LTC residents
• Maintaining safe environments with the increasing clinical complexity of residents in LTC

Progress in resident safety in Canadian LTC settings is imperative to improve the safety of frail elders in this setting. Next steps include:
• Dissemination of findings to key stakeholders and media outlets
• Presentation of findings at conferences across Canada
• Increase research capacity to study the issues and identify priority actions
• Encourage increased funding of researchers and centres of excellence so that best practices can be identified
• Focusing research on both action-oriented/demonstration projects and applied health services research

Figure 1. Factors, priorities and gaps in resident safety in LTC

![Figure 1. Factors, priorities and gaps in resident safety in LTC](image-url)