

Educa&care: promoting learning and best care through a Community of Practice (CoP)

Abstract

Introduction: The number of old people will grow to 22% of the population by 2050, primarily due to increasing life expectancy. Some studies show that the majority of old dependent people will be diagnosed with dementia. In the last stage, there is a substantial or total dependence in self-care and need of palliative care. People living with advanced dementia have complex needs, are highly dependent on others but can benefit from a dementia specific palliative approach to care that helps them to live the best life possible.

Aims: To evaluate the implementation of a Community of Practice related to people with total dependency on self-care and their family caregivers.

Methods: Educa&Care is a project whose purpose is to identify and share good practices through a Community of Practice (CoP), which includes researchers, professionals, students and family caregivers. An on-line platform, small texts and videos were produced to support the practice. Questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were used to the evaluation.

Results: The CoP collaborative environment facilitated the learning process. Hot topics include analysis of evidences, palliative care, end-of-life care, caregivers' needs, therapeutic regimen, signals and symptoms, mobilization, pain, stimulation and evaluation of distress on the caregivers. There was a misconception about what means palliative care.

Conclusion: The final evaluation of the effectiveness of the CoP offers us the possibility to introduce changes in the nursing basic curriculum, continuing education of professionals and psychoeducational programs related to family caregivers.