

Sleep Health Management in Residential Aged Care Facilities

Authors : Elissar Mansour, Emily Chen, Tracee Fernandez, Mariam Basheti, Christopher Gordon, Bandana Saini

Abstract : Sleep is an essential process for the maintenance of several neurobiological processes such as memory consolidation, mood, and metabolic processes. It is known that sleep patterns vary with age and is affected by multiple factors. While non-pharmacological strategies are generally considered first-line, sedatives are excessively used in the older population. This study aimed to explore the management of sleep in residential aged care facilities (RACFs) by nurse professionals and to identify the key factors that impact provision of optimal sleep health care. An inductive thematic qualitative research method was employed to analyse the data collected from semi-structured interviews with registered nurses working in RACF. Seventeen interviews were conducted, and the data yielded three themes: 1) the nurses' observations and knowledge of sleep health, 2) the strategies employed in RACF for the management of sleep disturbances, 3) the organizational barriers to evidence-based sleep health management. Nurse participants reported the use of both non-pharmacological and pharmacological interventions. Sedatives were commonly prescribed due to their fast action and accessibility despite the guidelines indicating their use in later stages. Although benzodiazepines are known for their many side effects, such as drowsiness and oversedation, temazepam was the most commonly administered drug. Sleep in RACF was affected by several factors such as aging and comorbidities (e.g., dementia, pain, anxiety). However, there were also many modifiable factors that negatively impacted sleep management in RACF. These include staffing ratios, nursing duties, medication side effects, and lack of training and involvement of allied health professionals. This study highlighted the importance of involving a multidisciplinary team and the urge to develop guidelines and training programs for healthcare professionals to improve sleep health management in RACF.

Keywords : registered nurses, residential aged care facilities, sedative use, sleep

Conference Title : ICGGP 2022 : International Conference on Gerontology and Geriatric Psychiatry

Conference Location : Sydney, Australia

Conference Dates : August 30-31, 2022