



**QUEEN'S
UNIVERSITY
BELFAST**

The barriers & solutions to providing good quality palliative care in dementia in the GP practice

Carter, G., Galway, K., van der Steen, J., & Brazil, K. (2014). *The barriers & solutions to providing good quality palliative care in dementia in the GP practice*. Poster session presented at Showcasing Palliative Care Research in Northern Ireland, Belfast, United Kingdom.

Queen's University Belfast - Research Portal:

[Link to publication record in Queen's University Belfast Research Portal](#)

General rights

Copyright for the publications made accessible via the Queen's University Belfast Research Portal is retained by the author(s) and / or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing these publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

Take down policy

The Research Portal is Queen's institutional repository that provides access to Queen's research output. Every effort has been made to ensure that content in the Research Portal does not infringe any person's rights, or applicable UK laws. If you discover content in the Research Portal that you believe breaches copyright or violates any law, please contact openaccess@qub.ac.uk.

Open Access

This research has been made openly available by Queen's academics and its Open Research team. We would love to hear how access to this research benefits you. – Share your feedback with us: <http://go.qub.ac.uk/oa-feedback>

GPs' Perspectives of the Barriers and Solutions to Good Quality Palliative Care in Dementia

Gillian Carter^{1*}, Karen Galway¹, Jenny van Der Steen², Kevin Brazil¹

¹School of Nursing and Midwifery, Queens University Belfast, ²VU University Medical Centre, Amsterdam

* g.carter@qub.ac.uk

BACKGROUND: Dementia is a significant worldwide health issue, however, it is often insidious in onset and difficult to diagnose, therefore GPs have expressed a limited confidence in their diagnostic skills, extending into their prognostication of the disease. As a result diagnosing the terminal phase of dementia has been identified as a significant challenge to delivering effective palliative care. Therefore, identifying the challenges faced by the GPs in this field will help to guide their training and support, and as a result could assist in the provision of sustained and effective palliative care for their dementia patients.

AIM: To investigate GPs' perceptions of the potential barriers and solutions to the provision of good quality palliative care in dementia in their GP practices

METHODS & ANALYSIS

- Cross-sectional postal survey of GPs located across Northern Ireland (Autumn 2013)
- Purposive, cluster sampling approach using Quality & Outcomes Framework data & Business Services Organisation's Practice and GP lists
- Inductive thematic analysis of barrier statements.

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

- "Care for Dementia Patients at the End of Life" – Section C
- Solicits respondents' suggestions of the three most significant barriers to the provision of palliative care in dementia and associated potential solutions.

CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

- **133** completed surveys – a response rate of **39.1%** (133/340)
- **60.9%** of surveyed practices (**106/174**) represented

RESULTS

BARRIER 1: Lack of knowledge & understanding - Level of family/carer, healthcare professional & public understanding; recognition of dementia as a palliative condition

Suggested solutions: Enhanced education & training; media dementia awareness campaigns

BARRIER 2: Limited availability of resources - GP resources – practice & time pressures; access to community staff & resources; funding

Suggested solutions: Increased funding from authorities; protected time for clinical assessments

BARRIER 3: Uncertainty of appropriate care - Inappropriate medical treatments, interventions & hospitalisations; difficulty of assessments, diagnosis & prognosis; Lack of standardised guidelines & information

Suggested solutions: Enhanced education & training; greater community specialist support; specific practice protocols; accurate prognosis algorithms

BARRIER 4: Poor interdisciplinary team approach - Team communication, integration & access to specialist support; continuity of care

Suggested solutions: Development of multidisciplinary team with one person coordinating dementia care; accessible community dementia teams; improvement of community links

BARRIER 5: Family - Family, carer & patient support; family resistance & disagreements

Suggested solutions: Optimising communication & relationships with families; increased funding for respite care; nominated family member to represent individual living with dementia

CONCLUSION

- Five main barriers to providing good quality palliative care in dementia were identified
 - Suggested solutions have a heavy emphasis on enhanced education & training
- The unequivocal importance of the family involvement and of full public dementia awareness were stressed to be crucial elements necessary to attain good quality palliative care in dementia.