

P13 - TRANSFORMING TEAMWORK IN LONG-TERM CARE THROUGH APPLIED THEATRE – PRELIMINARY RESULTS OF A PILOT STUDY

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Brief Description of Research or Project: The Baycrest Centre for Learning, Research and Innovation in Long Term Care is piloting and evaluating applied theatre workshops designed to enhance team competencies among long-term care home staff. Applied theatre is a form of experiential learning that is particularly suited to fostering significant learning in relation to humanistic values. Workshop themes were related to core team competencies such as communication, collaboration, and values. A variety of applied theatre exercises, which were experiential and process-based, were explored to help participants develop transferable skills such as communication, active listening, body language and empathy. As a low-fidelity simulation activity, applied theatre is ideal for exploring the complex, multi-layers associated with teamwork in long-term care, including the themes of power, status, multiple perspectives, cultural competence, and empathy. Preliminary findings and insights from the first year of the one-day workshops and follow-up interviews will be shared, including workshop effectiveness in fostering new ways of communicating and working with one's team, seeing another person's point of view, and valuing differences. Participant reflections on team competencies and how these influence interprofessional team functioning will also be examined. **Why is this research important to profile at the Research Day 2014?**

There is a growing urgency in long-term care to address the challenges and gaps in providing quality healthcare to a rapidly increasing demographic of aging adults. Enhancing interprofessional collaboration is directly linked to positive clinical outcomes, increased patient safety and healthy work environments. Communication, collaboration, values and ethics are core constructs of interprofessional competence. However in long-term care, barriers to the development of these competencies persist because of high staff turnover and diminished resources. Further, unregulated staff comprise nearly two-thirds of the staffing complement in long-term care settings. This workforce tends to be older on average, with wide variations in education and inconsistent access to training. In addition, perceived inequality in levels of power and status, cultural diversity, and varied literacy levels and learning styles generate diverse learning needs and team dynamics. Given the profile of this workforce, applied theatre, which is more experiential, low risk, and less reliant on written and didactic modalities than traditional educational approaches, holds promising potential as an effective teaching methodology. Leaders and educators will discover new ways of engaging staff in learning through 'serious' play as a strategy to facilitate self-reflection, an understanding

of the humanistic elements of care and shifts in values and perspective taking among staff, which are fundamental to transforming care.