



Recreation Therapy and Quality of Life in Supportive Living and Long Term Care

Project Overview:

Little is known about the impact of recreation services and interventions on the quality of life for individuals in the continuing care sector. In 2012, the Institute for Continuing Care Education and Research (ICcer) identified the need for study and documentation of the benefits of recreation therapy services. Residents, clients, families, and front-line staff see the benefits from these interventions, but the way funding is provided in Alberta makes it hard for providers to justify hiring more recreation therapy staff.

Based on the above, this study will examine recreation therapy activities in supportive living and long-term care facilities in Alberta. It will do so using a four-stage approach; specifically:

1. An *electronic survey* of supportive living and long-term care centres in Alberta. The purpose of this survey was to gain a better understanding of: (a) the number of people providing recreation programs and services in supportive living and long-term care facilities in Alberta; and (b) the amount of recreation programs and services provided in these same continuing care centres. Over 120 surveys were completed.
2. *Focus groups with recreation staff* from Supportive Living and LTC in order to review and refine the resident questionnaire discussed in point 4. Two focus groups were held and the resident questionnaire was modified based on participants' comments.
3. *Focus groups with recreation staff* to discuss recreation therapy activities and quality of life with residents in supportive living and continuing care. Data collection is ongoing.
4. *On-site questionnaire with residents* in supportive living and LTC centres throughout Alberta. This instrument measures recreation participation, recreation satisfaction, recreation provision, physical limitations, and quality of life (in terms of both life satisfaction and positive and negative affect). Demographic information is also requested, and residents are given the opportunity to provide input on the types of recreation activities they would like to see increased or established by their centre in the future. Data collection is ongoing.



Principal Investigators:

Dr. Gordon Walker, Professor Physical Education and Recreation, University of Alberta
gwalker@ualberta.ca

Dr. Bob Haennel, Acting Dean and Professor Rehabilitation Medicine, University of Alberta
bob.haennel@ualberta.ca

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