

What Makes a Nursing Home Feel Like Home?

Resident Perspectives

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Background

- A place that feels like home is a common goal, but few NH studies have examined "home" with residents.
- The concept of home was explored as part of a larger study, "Validating the Resident VIEW in Nursing Homes."

Methods

- We interviewed residents living in 32 randomly selected NH in Oregon stratified by quality, rural-urban location, and profit and not for profit status.
- Residents responded to the question (n=266), "Does it feel like home to you here?"
 - If yes: "What makes it feel like home?"
 - If somewhat or no: "What would make it feel like home?"
- We recoded as Yes (1) and No/Some (0) for logistic regression; kept as original for ordered and multinomial logistic regression.
- Open-ended responses were classified via open coding. Six major themes emerged (see central diagram).

Results: Qualitative Coding

- Yes, it feels like home (26% of residents)*
- 48% of responses described relationships with people at the nursing home.
 - 9% emphasized the importance of having family or other meaningful relationships from outside the nursing home
- Does not or somewhat feels like home (74% of residents)*
- 33% reported that nothing could replace their home.
 - 27% expressed a lack of autonomy
 - Inability to do preferred activities
 - Managing routines on their own time
 - Having freedom to come and go

For nursing home residents, relationship building, personal autonomy, and physical environment create and sustain feelings of home.



Results: Logistic Regression

- Residents in rural/frontier and urban nursing homes are equally to find it important that it feels like home, but rural/frontier residents are more likely to actually feel at home.
- Long-stay residents are more likely to find it important as well as experience compared to those who are short-stay.

Table 1. Odds ratios from logistic regression model of importance and experience measures for current nursing home feeling like home

	Important That It Feels Like Home	Yes, It Feels Like Home
Licensed capacity	1.00 (0.26)	1.01 (1.95)
# of deficiencies	0.99 (-0.23)	0.98 (-0.79)
Non-profit (v. for-profit)	0.65 (-1.05)	0.54 (-1.26)
Rural/frontier (v. urban)	1.00 (0.00)	2.88** (2.78)
Female (v. male)	1.35 (0.98)	1.16 (0.43)
Nonwhite (v. white)	0.45 (-1.40)	0.62 (-0.73)
Age (in years)	0.99 (-0.58)	1.00 (-0.23)
Long-stay (v. short)	3.51*** (3.75)	4.06** (3.24)
Shared (v. private)	0.83 (-0.59)	0.73 (-0.86)
Private pay (v. all others)	1.03 (0.06)	0.80 (-0.31)
N	223	228

Exponentiated coefficients; t statistics in parentheses
* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Discussion

- Our results indicate that NHs can become home environments for their residents.
- Relationship building, personal autonomy, and physical environment are likely critical pillars for creating and sustaining feelings of home.
- Future research will examine variations in responses described here, including resident or facility characteristics, and length of stay.