THE NATURE OF ACTIVITY PROGRAMS IN ADULT CARE FACILITIES

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The aging of society and rapid swelling number of seniors with dementia are placing ever increasing pressures on health care resources. As a consequence, the future care of seniors with dementia may become limited to the provision of basic medical services, while approaches to care and especially activity programs known to enhance well being and quality of life are reduced or eliminated. To document the current availability and accessibility of these programs in different adult care facilities, and track future changes in them, we have collected information about such programs in different kinds of adult care facilities across the diverse regions of British Columbia, a Canadian province roughly the same size as France, Germany and the Netherlands combined. By means of a questionnaire and focus groups, we ascertained what types of activity programs (painting, making and listening to music, dancing, reminiscing, playing drama) are offered, to whom (e.g., seniors with mild or severe dementia) each program is offered, and on what schedule each program is offered; we also gathered information on the resources allocated to such programs by asking about who facilitates the activities (e.g., full or part-time staff, volunteers), about facilitators’ qualifications, and about the resources (e.g., equipment, staff and budgets) specifically ear-marked for the delivery of creative activity programs. The results reveal vast differences among facilities in the reasons for offering activity programs, in the nature of the programs that are offered, in the availability and resourcing of the programs, and in the personnel who deliver those programs.