

The Level of Family Involvement in the Nursing Care of Hospitalized Geriatric Patients in Two Teaching Hospitals in South Western Nigeria

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ABSTRACT The medical care of the elderly has not been given the necessary attention by the health care drive of the Nigerian government. To encourage government and her health facilities to focus on the care of the elderly, this paper evaluates the extent to which nursing care can be used to meet the needs of hospitalized geriatric patients and the extent to which family members are involved in this care. The Obafemi Awolowo University Teaching Hospitals Complex, Ile-Ife and the Wesley Guild Hospitals Ilesha were used as case studies. In all, 85 elderly patients in the adult wards were administered with questionnaires and interviewed to elicit the needed information. Data generated was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The paper observed that majority of the hospitalized elderly perceived the following as their nursing care needs: self-care, mobility, elimination, care of pressure areas and measurement of vital signs. Levels of family involvement in their care was also observed to be statistically significant in following aspects, bathing [$\chi^2 = 5.403$, $df = 1$ $p = 0.02$], dressing [$\chi^2 = 5.914$, $df = 1$ $p = 0.015$], changing of position in bed [$\chi^2 = 3.931$, $df = 1$ $p = 0.000$] and movement on the ward [$\chi^2 = 5.4903$, $df = 1$ $p = 0.015$]. Arising from these findings, the paper concluded that the level of family involvement in the nursing care of their hospitalized elderly persons was relatively high and by implication these hospitalized elderly patients were receiving more of unskilled and non-professional nursing care, with the probably outcome of prolonged hospitalization and its adverse psychosocio-economic effects.