Impact of social service staffing on nursing home quality and resident outcomes

Dr. Amy Restorick Roberts and Danielle Smith

Introductions

• Dr. Amy Restorick Roberts, Associate Professor of Social Work at Miami University and Scripps Gerontology Center Research Fellow
• Danielle Smith, LSW, NASW Ohio Chapter Executive Director

December 2011 - July 2012

NASW Ohio Chapter
Campaign to hold on to state regulation for social workers in smaller facilities

Research Matters in Advocacy

Questions we were asked:

• Why are social workers needed? Why not another type of professional?
• What do social workers do in nursing facilities? Can’t anyone do that?
• Can’t nursing facilities decide if they need more staffing?
• Won’t the assessments determine if there’s a problem?

Research Findings

Funded by a grant from the Retirement Research Foundation of Chicago, Grant #2017-168.

http://miamioh.edu/cas/academics/centers/scripps/research/publications/2019/03/social-service-staffing-nh-quality.html

Research Brief | March 2019
Funded by a grant from the Retirement Research Foundation of Chicago, Grant #2017-168.

http://miamioh.edu/academics/centers/scripps/research/publications/2019/03/social-service-staffing-nh-quality.html
Research Findings

Social service staffing remains low, while other departments have increased over time.

**Figure 1.** Nursing Home Staffing Levels in 1998 and 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staffing Title</th>
<th>1998</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RN with Administrative Duties</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RN Providing Direct Care</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housekeeping</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Licensed Practical Nurse</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research Findings

Research in Action

**Higher qualifications of social service staff improve resident outcomes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility Size</th>
<th>0-59 Beds</th>
<th>60-99 Beds</th>
<th>100-149 Beds</th>
<th>150-199 Beds</th>
<th>200-249 Beds</th>
<th>250+ Beds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of Switchboard (SW)</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of Paraprofessionals</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nursing homes follow minimum federal and state regulations regarding social service staffing.

Table 2. Staff Qualifications in Social Service Departments by Facility Size in 2016

- **Government Advocacy**
  - State, Federal
- **Agency Advocacy**
  - Staffing configuration, Policies
Discussion

Does your state have a regulation beyond the federal regulation?

What areas of advocacy have you noticed on a state level?

What ideas do you have to advocate on this issue?

References


Contact us

Amy Restorick Roberts, rober128@miamioh.edu

Danielle Smith, dsmith.naswoh@socialworkers.org