WHAT DOES THE LITERATURE SAY ABOUT INTERVENTIONS AIMING TO REDUCE OR DELAY ENTRY TO RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE, AND HOW DOES THIS COMPARE WITH OLDER PEOPLE’S PERCEPTIONS? KIM B. J, CONNOLLY M. J, BROAD J. B FREEMASONS’ DEPARTMENT OF GERIATRIC MEDICINE, NORTH SHORE HOSPITAL

Introduction

Since 1988, rates of residential aged care (RAC) use by older people in New Zealand have decreased, in part due to strategies to support older people at home. Published studies reveal evidence for delaying/avoiding RAC entry but little attention has been given to what older people themselves think. We aimed to describe the experiences and perceptions of older people faced with the decision about place of care, and compare them to the literature.

Methods:

Ethics approval was obtained (14/NTB/162). Reports (in English) were retrieved from PubMed and MedLine databases (1990-2015) and their bibliographies searched. Recruitment of participants (RAC residents and others) was via advertisements in local newspapers and through managers of RAC facilities. Semi-structured, one-on-one interviews were conducted with older people and one nominated carer. Interview data was analysed for themes and compared with the literature.

Results:

The literature revealed conflicting viewpoints regarding efficacy of interventions; particularly home visits.

Thirty-eight interviews were conducted. A support person was also interviewed where possible. The prevailing opinion was that home-based care was the most effective support that delayed/prevented entry into RAC facilities, contradicting many published articles, and current clinical trends. The preventative and precipitating role of family regarding RAC entry was highlighted, agreeing with known literature. The Needs Assessment process was regarded as needing reconsideration.

Conclusion:

That older people highly value home-based support services suggests that recent decisions to reduce provision of such services require review. In particular, the provision of low-level care in preventing/delaying entry into RAC facilities should be reviewed.