A Novel Approach to Integrating Ethics and Culture Change in Long-Term Care Communities: The EIT-4-BPSD Implementation Study

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In the nursing home setting, person-centered care promotes positive cultural change, enhances quality of work life, and improves quality of care. Person-centered care increases resident autonomy by empowering the staff. Researchers from the EIT-4-BPSD study are actualizing this ideal through the use of an implementation science strategy (Evidence Integration Triangle- EIT) designed to increase uptake of evidence based interventions which reduce the behavioral and psychological symptoms of dementia (BPSD) for residents.

The central focus of the EIT-4-BPSD study design is autonomy, both at the resident and organizational level. Each site (approximately n=50) designates an organizational staff member as “facility champion” who works collaboratively with internal stakeholders to set: organizational level goals aimed at overcoming barriers to person-centered care; individual level goals to bolster resident autonomy and participation in care; and address resident BPSD through evidence based person-centered approaches (e.g., tailored care plans, staff education, mentoring, motivation, and use of an algorithmic assessment model).

Multiple unique approaches are used to monitor organizational and resident level goals including care plan evaluation for person centeredness, goal attainment scaling, environmental and policy assessments, monthly stakeholder meetings, and a consortium of measures related to resident BPSD. Detailing this novel study design will promote a better understanding of the central principles of ethics in biomedical research into implementation science. This work has the potential to model the creation of a culture of ethically competent staff who are engaged and empowered to promote resident autonomy in the nursing home setting.