

Ethical Considerations and Strategies for Promoting Equity in Elderly Care

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DESCRIPTION

As societies age and the proportion of elderly individual's increases, ensuring equitable access to high-quality care becomes a pressing ethical imperative. However, disparities in healthcare access, quality, and outcomes among older adults persist, reflecting broader societal inequalities. The ethical considerations surrounding elderly care and propose strategies for promoting equity in this vital area of healthcare.

Ethical considerations

Older adults have the right to make informed decisions about their care preferences, treatment options, and end-of-life wishes. Respecting autonomy requires healthcare providers to engage older adults in shared decision-making, honor their values and preferences, and support their right to self-determination. This includes ensuring privacy, preserving independence, and avoiding ageist attitudes and stereotypes that may diminish the personhood of older individuals. Providing care that maximizes benefits and minimizes harm is a fundamental ethical principle in elderly care. Achieving justice in elderly care requires addressing healthcare disparities and promoting equitable access to resources, services, and supports.

Strategies for promoting equity

Many older adults face social and economic challenges that impact their health and well-being. Addressing social determinants of health, such as income, education, housing, and social support, is critical for promoting health equity among older adults. This may involve partnering with community organizations, advocating for policy changes, and implementing interventions that address social and economic disparities.

Providing culturally competent care that respects the values, beliefs, and preferences of diverse older adults is essential for promoting equity. Healthcare providers should receive training in cultural competence, engage with interpreters or cultural brokers when needed, and adapt care plans to accommodate the

cultural backgrounds and preferences of older adults and their families. Fragmentation of care can lead to disparities in healthcare access and outcomes among older adults. Care coordination and integration initiatives, such as interdisciplinary care teams, electronic health records, and care transitions programs, can improve communication, streamline care delivery, and ensure that older adults receive comprehensive, seamless care across healthcare settings.

Investing in preventive care and health promotion initiatives can help older adults maintain their health and independence and reduce the need for costly interventions later in life. This may include screening for age-related conditions, promoting healthy lifestyle behaviors, and providing education and support for self-management of chronic conditions. Community-based services and supports, such as home care, adult day programs, and transportation services, play a vital role in supporting older adults to age in place and maintain their independence. Expanding access to community-based services and addressing barriers to utilization can help older adults remain engaged in their communities and avoid unnecessary institutionalization. Advocating for policy changes that prioritize the needs of older adults and address systemic barriers to care is essential for promoting equity in elderly care. This may involve advocating for increased funding for geriatric services, strengthening regulations to protect the rights of older adults, and promoting age-friendly policies that support healthy aging and community inclusion.

CONCLUSION

Promoting equity in elderly care requires a multifaceted approach that addresses social, economic, cultural, and systemic factors contributing to healthcare disparities among older adults. By incorporating ethical principles such as respect for autonomy, dignity, beneficence, and justice into care delivery and implementing strategies to address healthcare inequities, healthcare providers, policymakers, and community stakeholders can work together to ensure care to all older adults.

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