

## FACTORS RELATED TO THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF ELDERLY RESIDENTS OF RURAL NURSING HOMES

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**Purpose:** The goal of this research is to identify and evaluate factors related to the quality of life of the elderly residents in nursing homes. The primary aim of this pilot study is to examine the relationship of physical functioning, psychological well-being, and connectedness to quality of life of elderly residents in a nursing home located in a rural community.

**Method:** A sample size of 35 participants will be recruited from two nursing homes located in rural southeast Georgia. Participants must meet the inclusion criteria: (a) 65 years old and older, (b) verbal and cognitive ability to understand the study and be able to give informed consent, (c) willingness to participate in the study as evidenced by signature on request for participation, and (d) at least three months past admission. Basic demographics will be collected including resident information (age, ethnicity, length of stay and room occupancy), as well as facility information (profit status, potential occupancy, and community size). The other instruments include: (a) Ferrans and Powers Quality of Life Index (QLI): Nursing Home Version; (b) Philadelphia Geriatric Center Multilevel Assessment Instrument, Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADL), and Personal Self-Maintenance Activities (PSMA); (c) Geriatric Depression Scale; and, (d) Lubben's Social Network Scale. The data obtained from instruments measuring QOL, physical functioning, psychological well-being and connectedness will be analyzed using SPSS for Microsoft Windows, current version. Descriptive statistics and frequency distributions will be performed on all variables to describe characteristics of the participants and scores on each instrument. Measures of central tendency and variance will be calculated as appropriate. Correlation coefficients, using Cronbach's alpha, will be calculated between each of the variables. Then multiple regression will be used to determine the relationship between those variables shown to have correlation.

**Findings:** This pilot study is currently in progress. The findings of this study are pending completion date, December 2, 2004.

**Discussion:** This study proposes that QOL of the nursing home resident is positively associated with three variables measurable within the context of the holistic individual. The variables are: (a) physical functioning, appraised though level of independence in activities of daily living; (b) psychological well-being, inversely measured with a depression scale; and, (c) connectedness, the concept that captures the impact of relationships, or social network.