Mind the gap: Is the Canadian long-term care workforce ready for a palliative care mandate?

SUMMARY POINTS
- The last several years have seen a global movement calling for a palliative approach to long-term care (LTC)
- Currently, such an approach remains uncommon despite its obvious need
- The aim of this paper is to explore the readiness of Canadian LTC homes for a palliative care mandate by exploring (1) efficacy for palliative care, (2) self-reported patient-centered behaviour relevant to palliative care, and (3) quality of work life at LTC homes in four Canadian provinces

HOW WAS THE STUDY DONE?
- We relied on a cross-sectional design and gathered self-report data
- A survey was conducted in four separate long-term care homes in the provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Ontario
- Each employee working regularly at the home was invited to participate either personally or by workplace mail

KEY FINDINGS
- Some strengths in readiness are a fairly robust quality in work experience, with those involved in patient care somewhat more likely to experience satisfaction at work
- Our results also suggest that staff involved in patient care are feeling more efficacious in palliative care as they gain experience
- Some identified weaknesses included an apparent failure to make gains in the practice of patient-centered care with increased work experience, a relatively greater vulnerability to burnout symptoms among direct care staff, and a higher (though still infrequent) risk of experiencing trauma for staff involved most directly in patient care
- We also documented the existence of some systematic differences in self-reported patient-centered behaviour and work satisfaction across the four participating homes

Reference: