KEY POINTS

- There are increasing number of resident living and dying in LTC homes that require a palliative approach to care
- However, LTC homes are ill-prepared for the deaths of residents and provide sub-optimal palliative care, including poor pain management, poor engagement in advance care planning, unnecessary hospitalizations and use of feeding tubes.
- The SPA-LTC program is an intervention that can help address these issues and build capacity among LTC staff to improve the delivery of a palliative approach.

RESEARCH TOPICS

- The purpose of this study was to evaluate the SPA-LTC program's impact on resident and family, staff knowledge and self-efficacy in palliative care and organization outcomes.

HOW WAS THIS STUDY DONE?

- The study used a mixed methods design that included both quantitative and qualitative data from four LTC homes in Ontario.
- Chart audit, family care conference (FCCs), surveys and focus groups were used to evaluate perceptions from staff, residents and families regarding the SPA-LTC program and gain organization.

RESULTS

- 64% (n=24) residents had FCCs.
- Family reported feeling well supported during FCCs (mean = 0.88; SD = 1.15) and perceived them to be positive and useful.
- Higher proportion of residents who had FCCs had dementia, suggesting higher need among this population.
- Staff felt the comfort care rounds provided opportunity for critical reflection surrounding death.
- Overall, illness trajectory pamphlets were perceived as informative.
- PSW and support staff groups appeared to have higher needs for education and need for inter-professional collaboration (n=317; 45% staff survey response rate).
- Post-implementation findings included slight improvements in the appropriateness and number of ED visits and hospital admissions.

REFERENCES: