"I never thought I will end up here": nursing home relocation decisions among Lithuanian older adults

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Introduction

- Strong family care tradition
- 2.8 million residents, 19 percent are older than 65
- Nursing home relocation is one of the most significant and challenging experiences in older age.
Research design and sample

- Biographical interviews with 25 older people (9 men, 16 women)
- K. Charmaz’s constructivist version of grounded theory, and Ryan and Deci’s self-determination theory
- Nursing homes located in Vilnius city (capital of Lithuania) and its district

The aim of the research was to explore the identity continuity of older people after relocation to a nursing home.
Results

Relocation decision-making process:
I. nursing home relocation rationalization;
II. role in and control of the decision-making process;
III. reflections on the relocation decision and its outcomes.
I. Nursing home relocation rationalization

Care decisions are not openly discussed – family care is expected.

- Unavailability of family members to provide care due to “important reasons”
- Not wanting to be a burden to one’s children
- Lack of social support in the community
II. Role in and control of the decision-making process

- Shared decision-making

- One sided decision-making
  1. Older person vs. the family
  2. “Behind my back”
III. Reflections on the relocation decision and its outcomes

- Accessibility to a variety of social services and enabling physical environment

- Increased frequency of social interactions

- More opportunities to engage in meaningful leisure activities
Conclusions and implications

- Relocation to the nursing home – the end or new opportunity?
- Potential of life in a nursing home to foster the sense of wellbeing?
- Challenges to (in)formal care organization?
Thank you!

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