

RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Weight Loss in Aged Care Facilities

Professor Esther Chang from the School of Nursing and Midwifery, together with Advantaged Care and Domain Principal Group, has been awarded a UWS Research Partnership Program grant to investigate the treatment of residents in aged care facilities who are experiencing weight loss.

'Some elderly people in aged care facilities lose weight to the detriment of their overall health' says Professor Chang. 'Reversible causes of weight loss among residents in aged care facilities increase the morbidity and mortality of elderly people, increase costs to the healthcare sector, and increase the health burden of the resident, and distress their family members and the nurses and other staff caring for the resident. Our study will evaluate a treatment protocol to reverse this weight loss by using a comprehensive clinical step-by-step problem-solving procedure that looks at the care of residents, staff training, and the residential aged care facility of the industry partners. We aim to improve the evidence-based practice that addresses this serious health issue in aged care facilities.'

This pilot project will assess and monitor weight change in 20 residents. Reversible causes of weight loss will be identified and treated using the new framework. Another group of residents receiving standard care will form the control group. The average weights of the two groups will be compared, and weight change trends identified and compared across time in order to identify a progressive beneficial effect, if any, of the framework. By using both qualitative and quantitative analysis, the results will evaluate the strength and viability of the framework's implementation.



This study will improve health and quality of life for residents in aged care facilities who are experiencing unintentional weight loss with the additional benefit of reducing costs to the healthcare sector and community.

Project Title: Evaluating the application of a clinical framework to address weight loss in residential aged care facilities

Funding has been set at: \$30,000

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<http://www.uws.edu.au/nursing>

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For more information on UWS Research Partnership Program, check:

http://www.uws.edu.au/research/researchers/funding_opportunities/internal_research_grants