

Research Project

Ethical issues in the care of older people in Ethiopia

Third-party funded project

Project title Ethical issues in the care of older people in Ethiopia

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Organisation / Research unit

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Department

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Background: Older people in Ethiopia remain vulnerable and unnoticed. Although traditional family and community support are believed to be the main sources of care for older people, these sources are weakening due to mainly the growth of industrialisation and urbanisation. In the face of poverty and fragile health care system in the country, health care for the elderly faces ethical challenges that need much attention.

Objectives: The main objective of this study is to explore ethical issues in the care of older people in Ethiopia. Under this, there are four specific objectives: (1) to explore older people experiences of ethical situations while receiving care in primary health care settings; (2) to explore ethically problematic situations in providing care to older people; (3) to explore the experiences of facing and coping with ethically difficult situations in connection with elderly care; and (4) to explore factors that lead to steering away from ethical standards.

Methods: This will be a qualitative study using in-depth semi-structured interviews to collect data. The interviews will be conducted among purposively selected older patients and (formal and informal) care providers in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia's capital. We will audiotape, transcribe and thematically analyse the data to present the findings.

Study relevance: This research will contribute to understandings of the ethical issues arising in relation to providing elderly care in a developing context. The findings of this study will inform discussions regarding the need to incorporate both carers' and care receivers' perspectives in designing strategies to better address challenges in maintaining older people dignity in resource poor settings where prioritisation comes into play to intensify ethical dilemmas. The results of such a study could also contribute to developing training materials to health care practitioners working in the areas of geriatrics in Ethiopia.

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Published results

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