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ETHICAL CHALLENGES OF PROVIDING CONTINENCE CARE IN AGED CARE
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Abstract Content: Background: In recent years there has been an increased recognition of the need to respect older peoples' desire to have choice and autonomy. Despite the move toward person-centred care, little is known about how nurses and unlicensed carers enable choice and autonomy for individuals in residential aged care who require continence care.

Aim: The purpose of this grounded theory study was to explore the process residential aged care staff used to provide continence care to residents.

Method: Data were derived from semi-structured interviews with 19 nurses and unlicensed carers, 88 hours of field observations in two facilities, and 87 accreditation reports. Data generation and analysis occurred simultaneously using open coding, theoretical coding and selecting coding until saturation was achieved.

Findings: In the context of providing everyday continence care staff found it difficult to operationalise residents' desires to exercise choice and autonomy in relation to bladder and bowel function. Contributing factors included a competing duty of care responsibility to protect residents, a perceived lack of alternative care options, a lack of staff, and challenges posed by residents' physical and cognitive dependence.

Conclusion: Despite the presence of a quality framework that evaluates resident choice and involvement in care, multiple factors within the residential aged care sector mitigate against residents exercising such choice and autonomy.

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Presenting Author Bio 2: Professor Beverly O’Connell holds the position of Dean for the Faculty of Nursing at the University of Manitoba, Canada. She was previously the Associate Dean (Research) for the Faculty of Health at Deakin and the Inaugural Chair in Nursing at Deakin–Southern Health Nursing Research Centre. She has extensive teaching and researching experience and is committed to improving patient care through the development of clinical evidence-based practice leaders and evidence-based patient care.

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