



CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES

A LONG-TERM CARE PARADIGM SHIFT TO COMMUNITY FAMILY CARE MAY AMELIORATE DISABILITY

Long-term care quality assurance should consider a shift to community- and family-based services that include life quality measures.

A forum was held at the Brookings Institution on “Creating a Long-Term Care Quality Alliance.” The moderator and keynote speaker at the forum was the former Secretary of the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services. The forum was attended by policy people associated with long-term care issues.

Summary

Two critical points were made for consideration in changing the long-term care design to improve quality. The first point was that there is a paradigm shift from long-term care services being provided in traditional long-term care facilities to services being provided in the home and communities with the involvement of families. The second point involved addressing quality of life issues. The paradigm shift to home- and community-based services changes the mode of interventions from a hierarchical bio-medical model to one that applies quality services based on practices that involve the social and behavioral sciences that include a broad range of community services with a focus on the family. Quality of life issues related to service delivery, for the most part, lie outside of the hierarchical biomedical health care delivery system. Thus, there is need to train personnel who deliver services with skills that apply to the daily life of clients. in their homes, in a consistent manner. The need for new service formats will require new personnel preparation for those who deliver services that result in measured socially valid benefits to client.

Disability Prevention Issue

Once valid behavioral measures of function for self-sufficient community life and life quality are identified, it is then possible to develop protocols and train personnel to conduct reproducible programs to maintain or improve function of people who are vulnerable to diminished health in their homes. The consequence of failure to address the paradigm shift to home- and community-based programming and quality of life issues of vulnerable populations is diminished health status that may lead to disability and secondary disabling conditions.

Activity

A letter was sent to a long-term disability advocate concerning the long-term paradigm shift to community-based, family-centered care and the consequences for onset of secondary disabling conditions.

Principle

Long-term care quality assurance should consider the shift to community- and family-based services that include life quality measures.