

Department of Health Sciences

Mid Sweden University 2024



Experiences of care encounters in Swedish home care setting: perspectives from older persons and home care nurses

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ACADEMIC THESIS

For the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the Faculty of Health Sciences at Mid Sweden University, Campus Sundsvall, which will be publicly defended in room E409 on September 27 at 10:30 AM.

External reviewer is Prof. Annica Kihlgren, Örebro University

Abstract

Anna Larsson Gerdin (2024). Experiences of care encounters in Swedish home care setting: perspectives from older persons and home care nurses, Mid Sweden University. Doctoral thesis 410, ISBN 978-91-89786-71-4, ISSN 1652-893X.

Sweden's healthcare system now emphasizes home care for older persons, prioritising dignity and comfort by allowing them to stay in familiar surroundings. Despite the importance of care encounters between older persons and home care nurses, these interplays are unknown due to their private nature and are sparsely researched. The overall aim of this doctoral thesis was to explore, describe, and gain a deeper understanding of the lived experiences of care encounters in home care, as perceived by older persons and home care nurses, to generate knowledge for nursing practice. Using a qualitative design, purposively selected older persons and home care nurses were interviewed, and the data was analysed through various interpretive methods. Findings show that while home care offers convenience, challenges arise, such as conflicts between nursing routines and daily life, unclear communication, and dependence on support. Older persons strive for independence but face challenges due to their reliance on home care nurses. Home care nurses encounter diverse needs, balancing patient care with the constraints of time and organisational demands. Analysis highlights the complexity of care encounters, the influence of assigned home care nurses on care encounter quality, and the need for relational, moral, and practical care to uphold dignity and autonomy. Adequate time, knowledge, and resources are essential for improving care encounters in home care.

KEYWORDS: care encounters in home care, caring, everyday life, equality in care, experiences, health and well-being, home care nurses, Kari Martinsen, nursing, older persons, qualitative research.