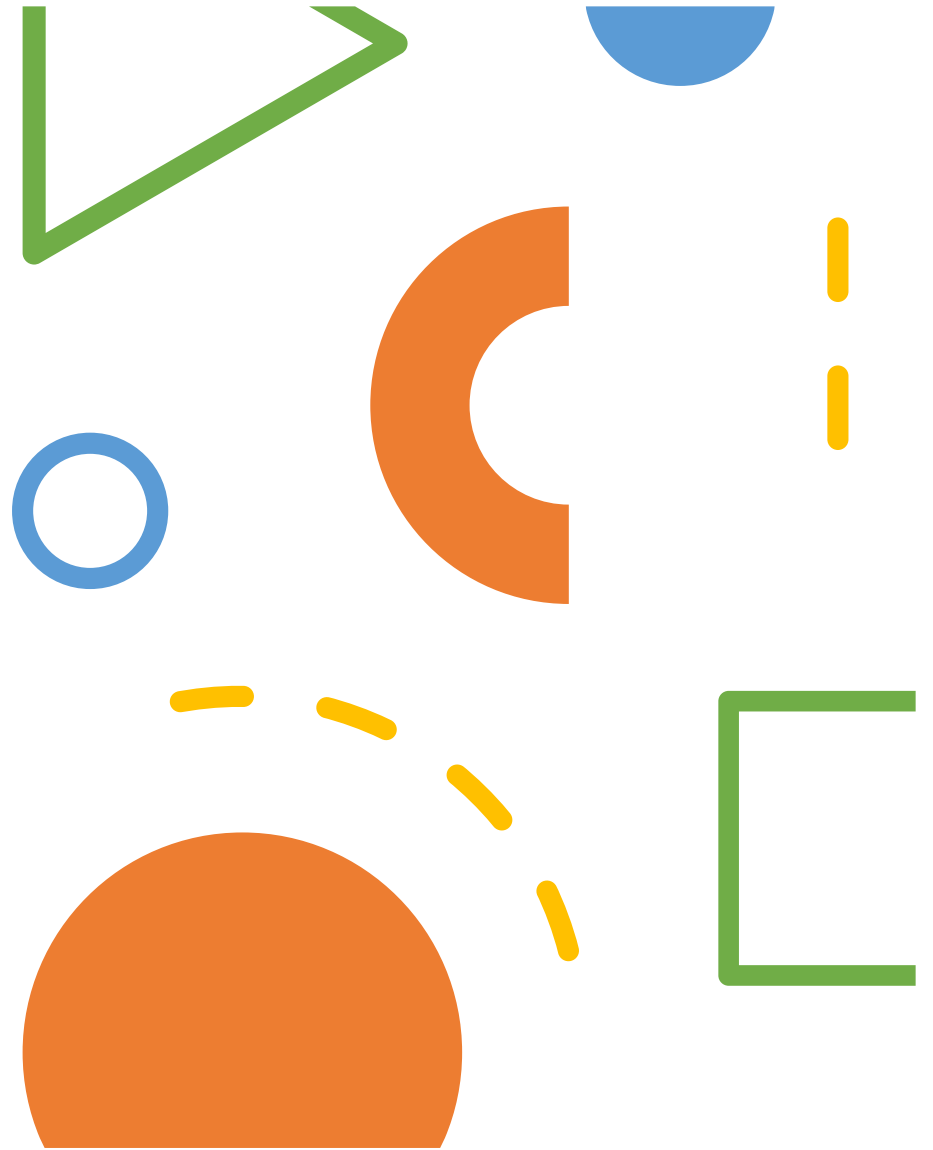


# Research update

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# Exploring Nurses' participation in Decision-Making Support for Elderly Residents

Research on the Impact of Workplace Learning on Nurse  
Competency in Long-Term Care Facilities

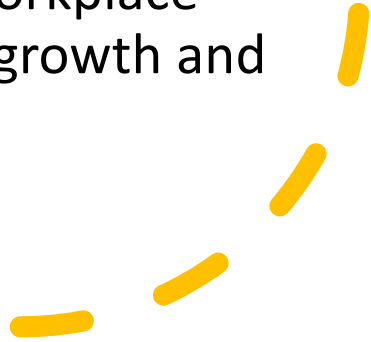


# Introduction

- Rapidly increasing aging population, making comprehensive care for the elderly a critical challenge – Japan as the top country with the highest share of people aged 65 and **OVER** (United Nations, 2023)
- Advance Care Planning (ACP) plays a crucial role in ensuring quality end-of-life care, respecting the dignity and values of elderly residents and their families.
- Aims to explore the possible impact of workplace learning experiences on nurses' competency in supporting elderly residents' decision-making in long-term care facilities.


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## Research Objectives

- 1. Assess nurses' understanding of their role in elderly residents' Advance Care Planning (ACP) process.
  - 2. Identify challenges and barriers faced by nurses in participating in end-of-life care decision-making.
  - 3. Explore the effectiveness of workplace learning on nurses' professional growth and competency in ACP.
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# Methodology

- Qualitative research design using semi-structured interviews.
  - Participants: Registered nurses and managers in aged care facilities.
  - Data Collection: Interviews were conducted to gather insights on workplace learning and its impact on ACP competency.
  - Data Analysis: Thematic analysis to identify patterns and themes in the interview data.
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**Qualitative Research Design:**  
Semi-structured interviews.



**Participants:** Registered nurses and managers in aged care facilities.



**Data Collection:** Conduct interviews to gather insights on workplace learning and its impact on ACP competency.



**Data Analysis:** Perform thematic analysis to identify patterns and themes in the interview data.

# Nurses' Role in Aged Care Facilities

- Nurses are pivotal in providing comprehensive care, including physical, emotional, and psychosocial support to elderly residents.
- They facilitate communication between residents, families, and the healthcare team, ensuring residents' preferences are listened and respected.
- Nurses also play a crucial role in monitoring residents' health, managing chronic conditions, and providing palliative care when necessary.

(Keuning-Plantinga, et al, 2023)

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- Interview Guides Overview: The study will utilize semi-structured interviews with registered nurses and managers in aged care facilities to explore their roles in supporting elderly residents with decision-making, particularly in the context of Advance Care Planning (ACP).
  - Interview Focus Areas:
    - Nurses: Understanding their educational background, roles, workplace learning experiences, and perceived competencies in ACP.
    - Managers: Understanding their perspective on nurses' roles in ACP, challenges faced by nurses, and the effectiveness of workplace learning on nurses' individual growth.



# Key Themes from Thematic Analysis

## Theme 1: Respecting Residents' Autonomy

- **Codes:** Personalized care, decision-making barriers, family involvement.
- **Findings:**
  - Nurses often face challenges in balancing residents' autonomy with medical recommendations (e.g., dietary preferences vs. medical safety)
  - Families play a significant role in ACP decisions, particularly in cases of dementia, but their involvement sometimes creates conflicts
  - Nurses facilitate compromises (e.g., grinding food to ensure safety while respecting preferences)
- **Connection to Objective 1:** Highlights the complexity of nurses' roles in ACP and the importance of strategies to manage family and resident dynamics.

# Key Themes from Thematic Analysis

- **Theme 2: Workplace Learning Opportunities**
- **Codes:** Structured training, peer learning, practical skills acquisition.
- **Findings:**
  - Regular training sessions on topics like first aid or oral care provide useful knowledge, but ACP-specific training remains limited
  - Informal learning, such as peer mentoring and collaborative problem-solving, complements formal training
  - Observations: While nurses value workplace learning, targeted ACP education is necessary to align training with end-of-life care needs
- **Connection to Objective 3:** Demonstrates the value of workplace learning but also identifies gaps in ACP-specific education.

# Key Themes from Thematic Analysis

- **Theme 3: Emotional and Professional Challenges**
- **Codes:** Emotional resilience, interpersonal conflicts, balancing workload.
- **Findings:**
  - Emotional strain from residents' deaths and family conflicts is a recurring challenge
  - Mentorship and teamwork mitigate emotional stress, especially for junior nurses
  - Observations: Nurses need both workplace support systems and personal coping strategies to handle these pressures
- **Connection to Objective 2:** Highlights barriers such as emotional fatigue and interpersonal challenges that hinder effective ACP support.

# Key Themes from Thematic Analysis

- **Theme 4: Role Awareness and Growth**
- **Codes:** Professional identity, competency development, ACP involvement.
- **Findings:**
  - Senior nurses understand their evolving roles but recognize the need for ACP-specific skills and policies
  - Nurses with dual professional backgrounds (e.g., rehabilitation) bring unique insights but still require additional ACP-related training
  - Observations: Ongoing learning and mentorship are critical for professional growth and competency
- **Connection to Objective 1 & 3:** Demonstrates that role clarity and continuous learning enhance nurses' ACP-related competencies and effectiveness.

# Discussion

**Research Objective 1: Assess nurses' understanding of their role in elderly residents' Advance Care Planning (ACP) process**

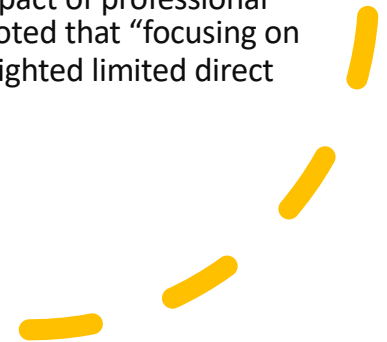
## 1. Nurses' Roles in Supporting Elderly Decision-Making

- **Key Content:**

- Nurses play a crucial role in observing and detecting early changes in health.
- Some nurses perceive their responsibilities as limited to clinical support and have limited understanding of their role in ACP.

- **Interpretation:**

- The varied understanding of nurses' roles reflects the impact of professional training and workplace environment. One interviewee noted that "focusing on health changes" was her primary responsibility but highlighted limited direct involvement in ACP.



# Discussion

**Research Objective 2:  
Identify challenges and  
barriers faced by nurses in  
participating in end-of-life  
care decision-making**

## 1. Emotional and Ethical Challenges

- **Key Content:**
- Nurses experience significant stress in managing emotions and navigating ethical dilemmas, such as balancing patient wishes with safety concerns.
- Conflicts arise between respecting autonomy and ensuring care quality.
- **Interpretation:**
- Nurses' involvement in ACP is not only technical but also deeply emotional. Interviewee 3 highlighted the emotional toll of managing patient deaths and the need for reflective support within teams.

## 2. Importance of Interprofessional Collaboration

- **Key Content:**
- Collaboration across professions (e.g., rehabilitation therapists and nurses) helps alleviate nurses' stress and provides multidimensional support for decision-making.
- **Interpretation:**
- While interdisciplinary collaboration offers significant benefits, the lack of structured systems for such collaboration is a notable challenge.

# Discussion

**Research Objective 3:  
Explore the effectiveness of  
workplace learning on  
nurses' professional growth  
and competency in ACP**

## 1. The Role of Workplace Learning in Enhancing Nursing Competency

- **Key Content:**
- **Formal Learning:** Regular training sessions provide technical support (e.g., communication with families).
- **Informal Learning:** Knowledge-sharing and observation among colleagues are key sources of skill development.
- **Interpretation:**
- Workplace learning is a critical pillar for professional growth, but current training often lacks applicability to ACP-related scenarios, particularly in ethical decision-making.

## 2. Nurses' Expectations for Career Development

- **Key Content:**
- Many nurses expressed the desire to strengthen their ACP-related competencies through workplace learning.
- A lack of targeted training programs was cited as a primary barrier to their career development.
- **Interpretation:**
- Supportive workplace learning environments are underutilized in enhancing nurses' ACP capabilities, highlighting the need for more targeted content and resources.

## **Conclusion and Future Directions**

- **Research Contributions:** Findings reveal the multifaceted and complex roles of nurses in ACP, emphasizing the need for comprehensive workplace learning to address ethical dilemmas and enhance interdisciplinary collaboration.

- **Practical Recommendations:**

1. Develop targeted ACP training, including case studies and ethical decision-making simulations.
2. Enhance the structure of informal learning through mentorship programs.
3. Strengthen mechanisms for interdisciplinary collaboration to support joint decision-making.

## **Limitation:**

- Limited data volume and communication misunderstandings caused by time constraints and language barriers.
- Single type of interviewees, with no participants from the management level at present, resulting in relatively limited perspectives in the feedback.