HOME-BASED CARE: PERCEPTIONS OF HIV AND AIDS PATIENTS IN SWAZILAND.

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ABSTRACT
Since the first diagnosis of acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) in Swaziland in 1981, medical researchers have been searching for a cure, but two decades later there is still no hope. Failure to find a cure has resulted in increased hospital admissions and drying out of resources to provide quality care to patients. As an alternative, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare in Swaziland introduced community home-based care, with families entrusted with the task of caring for their sick members. The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore and describe the perceived quality of care received by home-based care clients provided by informal caregivers, in order to ascertain the level of clients’ satisfaction. The findings revealed inadequacies in: resources for daily living, counselling during stressful experiences and caring skills amongst carers. It was also revealed that clients experienced loneliness, emotional and spiritual pain and uncertainty about the future. It is recommended that a proper discharge planning and referral system be established. Such a plan should utilise a multi-disciplinary approach to illness including the informal caregivers as well as families. The client’s diagnosis and the nursing care required should be discussed. The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare should develop a policy to address the issue of home-based care, as an option for HIV and AIDS patients in Swaziland.

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