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EXERCISING CHOICE IN LONG-TERM CARE: CHANGING OUR UNDERSTANDING OF CHOICE

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 2017 – 9:00 AM
409 TIER BUILDING | FORT GARRY CAMPUS

Dr. Pat Armstrong, Distinguished Research Professor of Sociology, Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies, York University; Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada

Dr. Hugh Armstrong, Distinguished Research Professor, Professor Emeritus of Social Work and Political Economy, Carleton University

Expanding choice has long been a central feature of health care reforms, with a focus on choices for individual patients and residents. However, choices are structured by factors often beyond the control of individuals or even particular care homes and by the extent to which staff or unpaid providers can build relationships that provide the basis for appropriate decision-making. Moreover, there is a fundamental tension between the need for routine, for evidence-informed decision-making and for safety on the one hand and on the other, responding to individual choices and events that disrupt routines on a regular basis. Based on our team research on long-term residential care in six high-income countries, we identify conditions that set the context for exercising meaningful choices for residents, staff, families and managers in long-term residential care. We start from the assumption that there will be events and choices that do not conform to routine patterns. And we assume that the conditions of work are the conditions of care.

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