Task 3: Research Proposal

* <https://www.health.org.uk/research-projects>
* <https://www.webarchive.org.uk/wayback/archive/3000/https://www.gov.scot/Topics/Research/by-topic/health-community-care/social-research/publications>

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| Name: | Title/Topic: Identifying Challenges Faced by Healthcare Assistants in Ensuring Patient Comfort and Managing Patient Care Effectively |
| What is your role within the organisation, and how are you linked to your proposed topic of research?  As a Healthcare Assistant in a residential care home, I support 32 older adults, providing personal care, assisting with mobility and meals, and promoting emotional well-being. I work closely with a team of five carers and regularly liaise with nurses and families to ensure patient comfort and dignity. Through this hands-on role, I have seen how factors such as staffing levels, communication gaps, and time pressures can hinder consistent patient comfort and quality of care.  These observations have driven my interest in this research topic. I aim to gain a deeper understanding of the key challenges that HCAs face and explore how improving organisational support and teamwork can enhance patient comfort and overall care outcomes. | |
| State the aims and objectives of your research: | |
| Aims: To identify and evaluate the key challenges faced by Healthcare Assistants (HCAs) in ensuring patient comfort and managing patient care effectively in residential care home settings. | |
| Objectives:   1. Identify and categorise key challenges faced by Healthcare Assistants (HCAs) in delivering patient comfort and managing patient care in residential care homes. 2. Analyse organisational and individual factors (e.g. staffing levels, training, teamwork, leadership, and emotional well-being) that influence HCAs’ ability to provide consistent, high-quality, patient-centred care. 3. Evaluate evidence-based strategies and interventions reported in the literature that aim to improve HCAs’ capacity to ensure patient comfort and effective care, and develop practical recommendations for care home settings. | |
| The purpose of this research is to: (Background or abstract or introduction) 30-50 words  According to Qahtani (2024), Healthcare Assistants often face challenges in ensuring patient comfort due to staffing pressures and limited training. Kessler and Heron (2020) noted that organisational support plays a critical role. Based on these findings, this study aims to explore strategies to address these challenges. | |

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| What is the specific focus of this research?  Identifying key challenges Healthcare Assistants face in ensuring patient comfort and managing patient care effectively in UK residential care homes, and evaluating evidence-based strategies to address these challenges.Identifying key challenges Healthcare Assistants face in ensuring patient comfort and managing patient care effectively in UK residential care homes, and evaluating evidence-based strategies to address these challenges. |
| The key point/issue of interest is:  Challenges faced by Healthcare Assistants in ensuring patient comfort and quality of care. |
| The broader significance of this point/issue of interest is…  Improve patient comfort, enhance care quality, and inform practical strategies to support Healthcare Assistants in residential care homes better. |
| Outline what point your project will aim to establish, and briefly explain how this will impact upon your practice.  The project will identify key challenges that limit Healthcare Assistants’ ability to ensure patient comfort and manage care effectively. Understanding this will help me advocate for targeted support and training, improving both care quality and my practice as a Healthcare Assistant. |
| How will this topic impact your organisation? (What are the benefits of this research project for your organisation?).  This research will help our care home identify practical ways to support Healthcare Assistants, improve patient comfort, enhance care quality, boost staff confidence and retention, promote teamwork, meet regulatory standards, and strengthen our home’s reputation for delivering person-centred care. |
| Literature review 30-50 words  an overview of the previously published works on a specific topic  Alsharari et al. (2025) report that Healthcare Assistants face challenges with staffing, training, and workload when ensuring patient comfort. Maxwell (2018) highlight the role of organisational support. Communication barriers and emotional strain further impact care quality (Spilsbury and Meyer, 2024). |
| Research Methodology 30-50 words  Secondary Method: this involves a systematic review of literature on challenges faced by Healthcare Assistants in ensuring patient comfort and managing care, exploring organisational factors, communication issues, training gaps, emotional strain, and effective interventions, extracting key themes, reported impacts, and practical recommendations. |
| Sources of information  Mention list of books, articles, or journals form which you will collect the information   * Alsharari, I.Z., Mutlaq , S.A.-A., Alsharari, M.S. and Al-Anzi, M.D. (2025). View of Patient Safety and Quality of Care: The roles, responsibilities and practices of healthcare assistants. [online] Jicrcr.com. Available at: https://jicrcr.com/index.php/jicrcr/article/view/1878/1601 [Accessed 13 Jun. 2025]. * Alshariri, I.Z. and Mutlaq, S. (2025). Patient Safety and Quality of Care: The roles, responsibilities and practices of healthcare assistants. Ebscohost.com. [online] doi:https://doi.org/2576-0017. * Arthur, A., Aldus, C., Sarre, S., Maben, J., Wharrad, H., Schneider, J., Barton, G., Argyle, E., Clark, A., Nouri, F. and Nicholson, C. (2017). Can Health-care Assistant Training improve the relational care of older people? (CHAT) A development and feasibility study of a complex intervention. [online] Nih.gov. Available at: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK424751/>. * Baillie, L. and Gallagher, A. (2021). Respecting dignity in care in diverse care settings: Strategies of UK nurses. International Journal of Nursing Practice, 17(4), pp.336–341. doi:https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1440-172x.2011.01944.x. * Fitzgerald, L., Gathara, D., McKnight, J., Nzinga, J. and English, M. (2020). Are health care assistants part of the long-term solution to the nursing workforce deficit in Kenya? Human Resources for Health, 18(1). doi:https://doi.org/10.1186/s12960-020-00523-6. * Kessler, I. and Heron, P. (2010). NHS modernization and the role of HCAs. British Journal of Healthcare Assistants, 4(7), pp.318–320. doi:https://doi.org/10.12968/bjha.2010.4.7.48906. * Maxwell, E. (2018). How training could improve the way healthcare assistants relate to older people. Nursing Management, 25(4), pp.12–14. doi:https://doi.org/10.7748/nm.25.4.12.s8. * McKenna, H.P., Hasson, F. and Keeney, S. (2024). Patient safety and quality of care: the role of the health care assistant. Journal of Nursing Management, [online] 12(6), pp.452–459. doi:https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2834.2004.00514.x. * Qahtani, A. (2024). THE IMPACT OF HEALTHCARE ASSISTANTS AND SUPPORT STAFF ON PATIENT CARE. Tec Empresarial, [online] 6(2), pp.998–1015. Available at: <https://revistastecac.cr/index.php/TEC/article/view/580>. * Salvatoroini, A. (2025). Healthcare Assistant Role Development Literature Review. [online] Scribd. Available at: https://www.scribd.com/document/539531809/Healthcare-Assistant-Role-Development-Literature-Review [Accessed 13 Jun. 2025]. * Spilsbury, K., Charlwood, A., Thompson, C., Kirsty Haunch, Danat Valizade, Devi, R., Jackson, C., David Phillip Alldred, Arthur, A., Brown, L., Edwards, P., Fenton, W., Gage, H., Glover, M., Hanratty, B., Meyer, J. and Waton, A. (2024). Relationship between staff and quality of care in care homes: StaRQ mixed methods study. Health and social care delivery research, 12(8), pp.1–139. doi:https://doi.org/10.3310/gwtt8143. * Spilsbury, K. and Meyer, J. (2024). Use, misuse and non-use of health care assistants: understanding the work of health care assistants in a hospital setting. Journal of Nursing Management, 12(6), pp.411–418. doi:https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2834.2004.00515.x. * Wensley, C., Botti, M., McKillop, A. and Merry, A.F. (2020). Maximising Comfort: How Do Patients Describe the Care That Matters? A Two-stage Qualitative Descriptive Study to Develop a Quality Improvement Framework For Comfort-related Care in Inpatient Settings. BMJ Open, [online] 10(5), p.E033336. doi:https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2019-033336. |
| Results / Conclusion  Improved Healthcare Assistants’ capacity to ensure patient comfort and deliver effective care. Findings would highlight organisational support and training as key enablers, promoting patient wellbeing, care quality, and sustainable professional development within residential care homes. |
| Ethical considerations   * All literature reviewed will originate from ethical, peer-reviewed, and credible sources. * Permission will be sought for the use of any proprietary data where required. * The privacy of subjects within all reviewed literature will be protected. * Anonymity of study participants from published research will be maintained in reporting. * All affiliations, funding sources, and potential conflicts of interest will be clearly declared. * Communication of research findings will be conducted with honesty and transparency. * Misleading presentation of reviewed data or biased interpretation of findings will be avoided. |

After the research proposal is approved, you need to write the research project as below in 3500 words

Introduction - rational, aim, objectives of research  - 750 words

Literature review  - 1050 words

Research methodology- 450 words

Data findings and presentations - 750 words

Conclusion and recommendations. - 500 words