

DESIGNATED HOSPICE ROOMS IN NURSING HOMES:

A NEW MODEL OF END-OF-LIFE CARE

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ABSTRACT

An aging population, the prediction that approximately 40% of elderly Americans will die in a nursing home by the year 2020, and a paucity of nursing homes designed to meet the needs of dying residents is creating the perfect storm. In an effort to respond to this trend, innovative nursing homes are establishing designated hospice rooms. This qualitative study utilized a multi-method design to describe these unique settings. The study identified two major themes: specific physical environmental features present in designated hospice rooms; and a prevailing emphasis on accommodating the needs of family members. The findings from this study will be beneficial to nursing home owners and administrators, social workers, and architects dedicated to improving the end-of-life experience for nursing home residents and their families.

