Reviewer’s report

Title: Factors Affecting Residents Transition from Long Term Care Facilities to the Community: A Scoping Review

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Reviewer: Tamara Sussman

Reviewer’s report:

The scoping review's stated aim is to highlight best practices in supporting the transition from LTC to community. The researchers accurately suggest that this is a neglected area of research. This is a well written paper that covers an important area. However a number of weaknesses warrant attention prior to publication.

First: There seems to be a mis-match between the stated aims and the findings which focus on study methods and factors associated with transitions. The authors should either consider repositioning the aims to a review of the state of the literature and factors associated with transitions OR offer some analysis regarding what one might infer from the 36 papers reviewed regarding best practices despite the limited state of the literature. Indeed the actual research questions do not match the aim of identifying best practices and are more in line with examining the methodological state of the literature and the factors associated with transitions.

Second: The notion that people should be able to ebb in and out of LTC is an interesting one which, as the authors point out, is currently NOT usual practice in Canada. The authors argue that transitions out of LTC should be a focus of practice because ultimately people do better when aging in their preferred place. This seems to be a rather weak rationalization as relocation is rarely a choice for anyone and improving in LTC may be as much a sign that this is an appropriate level of care as it is a reason that transitions out of TC should be considered. Perhaps a theoretical discussion of how we tend to dichotomize community care and LTC and how transitions in and out of both could improve aging for all would serve to enhance why looking at this issue is important. As it stands the rationale for the importance of exploring this type of service delivery is somewhat weak. The authors could alternately offer some context by highlighting whether current policies account for transitions out of LTC. How is LTC described and positioned in Canada? Is this different from the US where the authors note most studies are located?

Third: As they stand the findings are rather descriptive and it is difficult to appreciate why the authors focused on particular elements. Here a theoretical framework would also be useful. For example, the authors suggest that most studies do not examine who was involved in the discharge plan and note this as a limitation. What makes this interesting? Presumably the authors feel that an interdisciplinary approach to discharge would be useful to examining it is important but the authors do not state this explicitly leaving it to feel like they simply chose a series of variables to focus on. The part of the paper that focuses on factors associated with pre discharge
and discharge process is interesting and is suggestive of the type of framework that would have been useful to employ and use as a frame for all of the findings.

The discussion has some important information that could have been introduced and framed a bit earlier in the findings. For example, noting the type of outcomes that would be useful to examine appear to be based on a framework on what a positive transition out of LTC would 'look like'. Offering this framework as a means of examining the findings would have provided a structure that would have linked them better to the discussion.

Overall this is an interesting paper that fills an important gap in the literature. A bit more of a coherent analytical frame and rationale for why transitions out of LTC are an important aspect of service delivery that should be more integrated into usual practice (as stated above) would strengthen the paper.

**Are the methods appropriate and well described?**
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

**Does the work include the necessary controls?**
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

**Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?**
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Not relevant to this manuscript

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