

End-of-Life Research: Focus on Older Populations

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Under the leadership of the National Institute of Nursing Research at the National Institutes of Health, the End-of-Life Research Interest Group was organized in October 2000. The purpose of the group is to focus attention on and coordinate efforts to advance the national end-of-life research agenda. Eleven agencies or components within the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) are involved with the interest group. The group has sponsored several initiatives to gather information, expand, understand, and identify important areas for research about the end of life. One event conceived by the National Institute on Aging and championed by the end-of-life interest group was the workshop described in this special issue. The workshop was cosponsored by six DHHS agencies and a private foundation with a goal of specifying research directions for end of life in older populations. We specifically acknowledge Dr. Sidney Stahl and Dr. Pauline Sieverding with the National Institute on Aging who conceived the idea and obtained funding from the Fetzer Institute. The generous support of the Fetzer Institute along with the other sponsoring agencies made the workshop and this special issue possible. We also thank the planning committee who generously gave their time, energy, and creativity in identifying participants, organizing the meeting, and reviewing the manuscripts. Special thanks go to Dr. Kathleen Buckwalter, who served as the guest editor for this volume, and to Linda Hartzler, who provided clerical support and coordinated manuscript submission and review. This special issue describes the work of many people committed to improving the quality of life for people who are approaching the end of life, and we are indebted to them. For a complete listing of sponsors and contributors please refer to the appendix.

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