

Nursing homes a popular option in Taiwan

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Dr Szu-Yao (Zoe) Wang, who recently completed her PhD with UQ's School of Nursing, found that in Taiwan, where the culture dictates that children should care for their parents, aged-care facilities are becoming more popular.

"Family caregivers in Taiwan may experience criticism from a society which has a traditional cultural reticence about placing parents into a nursing home, as such action is considered contrary to filial piety," Dr Wang said.

"However, this study demonstrates that in an emerging culture, even where the younger generation is still influenced by traditional views, nursing home placement can be an acceptable option."

During 2005, Dr Wang spent six months in Taiwan conducting focus groups and interviews with the families of nursing home residents as well as registered and assistant nurses.

She said that while some family caregivers felt guilty, the negative perception of aged care was slowly transforming.

"Some are very harshly criticised and try to keep the fact that they have placed their family members in a nursing home a secret," Dr Wang said.

"Other do not think it is unfilial to put their parents in a nursing home – they feel they are caring by paying the fees and visiting.

"I think that as society changes and becomes more Westernised, it will become a more accepted practice."

Dr Wang's thesis recommended that affordable support services be made available in order to relieve the caregiver burden.

She said she hoped her research would assist in identifying potential problems experienced by both the nursing home resident and the family caregiver.

Source: Research Australia

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