

## Care Dependency in old age and at the end of life

Gerhilde Schüttengruber has devoted her research on the topics of palliative care and ageing, with a special focus on care dependency in the last phase of life.

The topic of her first research project was to investigate if care dependency is a frequently used attribution for people aged 80 years and older. A convenience sample was measured for their attitudes toward people aged 80 years and older using the Aging Semantic Differential (ASD) Scale. This project was followed by a research project aimed at measuring the grade of care dependency in patients and residents at the end of life by means of a secondary data analysis. The ambiguity of the term *end of life* required a concept analysis about this term. Based on the results of this concept analysis a Delphi Study for finding an expert consensus and a commonly and internationally recognized definition of *end of life* is being conducted. As her final PhD project, an analysis of the grade of and possible influencing factors for care dependency in very old age (85 years and older) will be performed. The results of these research projects are aimed at gaining deeper knowledge about the grade of care dependency and about which factors influence care dependency in very old people. These results and their envisaged transfer into practice may help to avoid or delay care dependency. The joint exploration of the topics last phase of life and care dependency and old age aim to generate a deeper and more comprehensive knowledge about this phase of life to better and more timely identify the needs of affected individuals and to initiate adequate and tailored measures.