You understand?
A qualitative study of nurses’ experiences caring for older patients with a minority ethnic background

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Denmark 5.8 mil - 13% immigrants + remnants

- 1.1 mil above 65 years old (19%)
- Life expectancy male=78.8 – female=82.8

Copenhagen 1.2 mil
- our district 33.000
  - 16%>65 y o
  - Life expectancy 72 years
  - 27% with a ethnic minority background
Home visiting nurses

- Increased specialization
- Fast track
- Multi-illness
- Community health care services

Self-care - the active patient role

Many older (persons) immigrants and refugees are challenged by the strong self-care agenda
Aim: To explore intercultural communication practices between home visiting nurses and older patients with a minority ethnic background

Method: Semi-structured interviews and participant observation
Three nurses providing care for patients in a Copenhagen district, which had a high rate of older minority patients.

Hermeneutic approach - thematic analysis.
Results

Overwhelmed feeling of powerlessness.
not to make oneself understood vs feelings of discomfort and irritation, 
overdone time

Different perceptions of health and health care needs
relatives push for alternative health care services which contradict the 
patient’s will.

Anxiety and uncertainty
(in)appropriate behavior, exceedance of bodily boundaries, optimal 
care and patient safety.

Communication strategies
personal experiences, non-verbal, primitive language use, other staff 
members’ expertise, translators and/or relatives, telecommunication.
Conclusion

Home visiting nurses seem to struggle with emotional, physical and institutional challenges providing care for patients with a minority ethnic background every day.

Organizational and colleague support may decrease the feeling of powerlessness of home visiting nurses caring for patients with a minority ethnic background and increase the quality of care.

- education – intercultural communication
- telecommunication
- local language catalogues
- online access to translators/staff/experts

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Questions?

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