Krista Harrison, PhD

Atlantic Fellow at GBHI
UCSF Memory and Aging Center
Home Country: USA
Field of Employment: Policy & Palliative Care

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UCSF Faculty Profile
Professional Profile

Key Areas: palliative care, geriatrics, home-based medical care, health services research, health policy, ethics

In the United States, efforts to improve quality of life and quality of care for individuals with advanced dementia have focused nearly exclusively on hospital and nursing facility settings. Little is known about the experience of individuals with advanced dementia who live at home, where it is more difficult to assemble the necessary medical and social resources.

Krista Harrison is a researcher focused on improving systems of care for older adults with serious illness and their caregivers who live in home- and community-based settings. Through the Atlantic Fellows program at GBHI, she aims to develop and test a model of palliative care that focuses on distress management and is tailored to the specific complexities of living with advanced dementia in the home. Her work will draw from her experience as a leader in a community-based hospice and palliative care organization and her training in geriatrics, health policy, public health, and bioethics. Harrison will use evidence from dementia and palliative care initiatives at UCSF and around the globe to address knowledge gaps, inform policy, and practice change. She aspires to transform care for older adults living at home with dementia in the U.S. and beyond.

“Optimizing the quality of life for people with dementia living at home and their families requires evidence-based transformation of health systems and health policy.”
Bio: Krista Harrison completed her undergraduate degree in biology and English at Williams College; a PhD in Bioethics, Health Policy & Management at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health; and a postdoctoral research fellowship in geriatrics at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF). Harrison has contributed to national program evaluation as a health research analyst at Mathematica Policy Research, and she tested models of community-based palliative care as director of research and education at Capital Caring, a large nonprofit hospice organization. As of July 2017, she is an assistant professor in the UCSF Division of Geriatrics and a UCSF Pepper Center Scholar.