

Table 1: The table shows the results of a literature search regarding previous work completed on elder orphans. Search terms of “elder orphan,” “unbefriended elderly,” “patients without surrogates,” and “vulnerable elderly” were used in Google Scholar, PubMed, CINAHL, and Health Reference databases.

Author	Year	Title	Comments
<i>Elder orphan</i>			
Soniat B. & Pollack M.	1994	“Elderly Orphans with Alzheimer’s Disease: Non-Traditional Support Systems”	Describes differences between a functional family system and an informal support network providing assistance to an “elderly orphan”
Sherer R. A.	2004	“Who Will Care for Elder Orphans?”	Geriatric Times article describing a growing population and a bill to expand medical training programs
<i>Unbefriended elderly</i>			
Gillick M. R.	1994	“Medical Decision-Making for the Un-Befriended Nursing Home Resident”	Reviews pathways of addressing decision-making in nursing home residents without decision-making capacity or surrogates, such as use of ethics committees
Freeman I. C.	1995	“One More Faulty Solution Is Novelty without Progress: A Reply to “Medical Decision-Making for the Un-Befriended Nursing Home Resident””	Refutes the idea that a simple, less cumbersome process is needed for nursing home residents without decision-making capacity or surrogates
Teaster P. B.	2002	“The Wards of Public Guardians: Voices of the Unbefriended”	Through qualitative data collection and analysis, this study explores the interaction between adult public guardianship wards and their public guardians, including ward satisfaction and perceptions, guardian responsiveness, and investigation of the guardian-ward relationship
Karp N. & Wood E.	2004	“Incapacitated and Alone: Healthcare Decision-Making for Unbefriended Older People”	Synopsis of a 2003 American Bar Association Commission on Law and Aging report. This report found limited existing studies on the unbefriended elderly; however, available estimated data was compelling enough for the Commission to issue

recommendations to ensure the ethical treatment of the unbefriended elderly

Pope T. M. & Sellers T.	2011	“Legal Briefing: The Unbefriended: Making Healthcare Decisions for Patients without Surrogates”	Overview of legal developments in medical decision-making for the unbefriended elderly, including an outline of the problems involved in this type of medical decision-making and a selection of potential solutions
Johnstone M.-J.	2014	“Caring about the Unbefriended Elderly”	A presentation of the shortcomings of interventions for the elderly when the individual is an unbefriended elder and a call for nurses to identify and advocate for this vulnerable group of patients

Patients without surrogates

Meier D. E.	1997	“Voiceless and Vulnerable: Dementia Patients without Surrogates in an Era of Capitation”	Describes how the growth of a dementia population will add to the dilemma of difficulties of complex health-care decision-making and the increase in fiscal pressures by health-care environments while advocating for caution of undertreatment of the most vulnerable
Miller T. E., Coleman C. H., & Cugliari A. M.	1997	“Treatment Decisions for Patients without Surrogates: Rethinking Policies for a Vulnerable Population”	Provides an outline of the laws and policies surrounding decision-making for incapacitated individuals without surrogates, discusses the substitutes used by state governments that exist, and provides a model for healthcare to assist these special needs populations
Chichin E. R.	2004	“Ethics and the Elderly”	Addresses health-care decision-making with elderly and uses case examples to explore situations
Crampton A.	2004	“The Importance of Adult Guardianship for Social Work Practice”	This article reviews the guardianship decision-making process and how social workers can have a role in promoting social justice through this process
Frank C.	2005	“Surrogate Decision-Making for “Friendless” Patients”	This article reviews surrogate decision-making and explores how and why alternative means of substituted decision-making must be found
Quinn M. J.	2005	<i>Guardianships of Adults</i>	Describes the history and institution of guardianship, provides alternatives to guardianship, explains the criteria for guardianship, and describes the court process and court monitoring of guardianships for community health and social service practitioners

