

The Relevance of Family Involvement in the Journey of Dementia Patients

Authors : Akankunda Veronicah Karuhanga

Abstract : Dementia is an age mental disorder that makes victims lose normal functionality that needs delicate attention. It has been technically defined as a clinical syndrome that presents a number of difficulties in speech and other cognitive functions that change someone's behaviors and can also cause impairments in activities of daily living, not forgetting a range of neurological disorders that bring memory loss and cognitive impairment. Family members are the primary healthcare givers and therefore, the way how they handle the situation in its early stages determines future deterioration syndromes like total memory loss. Unfortunately, most family members are ignorant about this condition and in most cases, the patients are brought to our facilities when their condition was already mismanaged by family members and we thus cannot do much. For example, incontinence can be managed at early stages through potty training or toilet scheduling before resorting to 24/7 diapers which are also not good. Professional Elderly care should be understood and practiced as an extension of homes, not a dumping place for people considered "abnormal" on account of ignorance. Immediate relatives should therefore be sensitized concerning the normalcy of dementia in the context of old age so that they can be understanding and supportive of dementia patients rather than discriminating against them as present-day lepers. There is a need to skill home-based caregivers on how to handle dementia in its early stages. Unless this is done, many of our elderly homes shall be filled with patients who should have been treated and supported from their homes. This skilling of home-based caregivers is a vital intervention because until elderly care is appreciated as a human moral obligation, many transactional rehabilitation centers will crop up and this shall be one of the worst moral decadences of our times.

Keywords : dementia, family, Alzheimers, relevancy

Conference Title : ICHAA 2023 : International Conference on Healthy and Active Aging

Conference Location : Copenhagen, Denmark

Conference Dates : July 10-11, 2023