

Family Caregivers' Burden in Providing Care to the Hospitalized Elderly: Findings from Two Hospitals in Kolkata, India

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Abstract : Family caregivers are vital in providing physical and emotional care to the aged. Providing care to aged involves physical as well as psycho-socio-economic challenges, compels the caregiver to fit in manifold roles, feel overburdened; which in turn requires them to change their priorities in life. The study conducted on family caregivers of the hospitalized elderly explores caregiver's burden using Zarit Burden Scale (ZBS). The data has been collected from two randomly selected Multispecialty Hospitals in Kolkata (India), after obtaining ethical clearance from the Institutional Review Board of both the hospitals. The predictors of burden were also assessed using interview schedules. Among fifty-seven caregivers who participated in the study, caregiver's burden was identified among thirty respondents with twenty-six having mild to moderate burden and four having moderate to severe burden. Majority of the caregivers were found to be female, reflecting the gendered nature of caregiving. Family caregivers spent more than six hours per day on caregiving, which severely disturbed their work-life including loss of job. The study revealed that the caregivers' marital status, family structure, academic qualification, occupation and time spent on caregiving are related to family caregivers' burden. The burden of care giving was accentuated by poor access to information, counseling, and lack of supportive services. The paper concludes by indicating the need for greater state interventions for caregivers.

Keywords : caregivers burden, family caregiving, hospitalized elderly, elderly in Kolkata, India, Zarit Burden Scale

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