

Caregiving Skills of Family Caregivers Providing Daily Care to Dependent Stroke Survivors: A Study in Colombo, Sri Lanka

SAMH Kumara^{1#}, SW Wimalasekera², G Ponnampereuma³,
AATD Amarasekara⁴, and SB Gunatilake²

¹Faculty of Graduate Studies, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Nugegoda, Sri Lanka

²Faculty of Medical Sciences, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Nugegoda, Sri Lanka

³Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo, Colombo, Sri Lanka

⁴Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Nugegoda, Sri Lanka

#mkumara200@gmail.com

Abstract

Stroke is a devastating disease that impacts the patient and the family. Often patients have long term disability and need the support of a family caregiver for activities of daily living (ADL). However, the specific care giving skills of a family caregiver are not known. This study aimed to determine the baseline skills of care related to ADL provided by family caregivers of dependent stroke survivors in the Colombo area. A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted on 250 family caregivers of dependent stroke survivors. Among them, caregiving capabilities of family caregivers were observed among 55 hospitalised patients in selected hospitals in the Colombo area. Family caregivers were assessed through a questionnaire. The caregiving skills were observed by two independent evaluators using a validated observational checklist. The level of caregiver performance was scored out of a total score of 100. Family caregivers had almost equitable gender distribution, 54% (n=135) were males. The mean (\pm SD) age of the subjects was 44.7 (\pm 13) years. Most subjects (48.4%, n=121) were educated up to GCE ordinary level and did not have any experience as a family caregiver (46.8%, n=117). The mean (\pm SD) observational score was 48.0 (\pm 15.3) and poor performance as per observational checklist was seen 58.2% (n=32) family caregivers. Though the insight of family caregivers indicated confidence in providing skilled care (44.8%, n=112), observed skills indicated poor 58.2% (n=32) family caregivers. The findings indicate a need for skills development training for family caregivers to deliver quality care related to ADL and thereby improve the quality of life of the stroke survivors.

Keywords: *ADL, Dependent stroke survivors, Family caregivers, Caregiving skills*