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Caregivers to Those with Traumatic Brain Injury: Identifying Caregiver Stressors and Effective Interventions

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Abstract

Background: Traumatic Brain Injury is a form of acquired brain injury that occurs when a sudden external trauma causes damage to the brain and depending on the severity of the injury, patients will need long-term care from caregivers who provide complete support to the affected. Feelings of stress make caregivers vulnerable to depression, anxiety, and reduce their ability to deal with coping which will further complications of caregiving.

Objective: The purpose of this literature review is to synthesize the research to identify caregiver stressors and clinically proven treatments to reduce caregiver stress in caregivers to those with TBI.

Methods: Articles were found using Cumulative Index of Nursing and Allied Health (CINAHL), PsychINFO, Google Scholar, and ProQuest with terms used in the database search that included: “psychological effects” and “caregiver”, “Caregiver stress” and “Nursing Interventions”, “effective treatment for caregiver stress,” “coping strategies for caregiver stress,” “Nursing,” “Chronic illness” and “Caregiver stress”, “Effects of” and “Caregiving” and “Family Caregiver Alliance”, and “Caregiving Statistics.”

Results: Stressors commonly identified by caregivers were psychological strains, adaptation, and social construct. Effective interventions were found to be: information, counseling, support groups, and respite.

Conclusion: the review findings provide valuable insight into being able to understand the possible stressful effects of caregiving and interventions that may be implemented to caregivers to relieve caregiver stress. Further research is needed to explore the effectiveness of existing interventions across multitudes of ethnicities.