

Exploring the Relationship between Mental Health Education and Caregiver Self-Efficacy

Introductory statement

When providing care for a loved one, caregivers often face negative changes in mental health including depression, anxiety, and social isolation. Recent research indicates that as caregiver burden increases, mental health decreases. This change in mental health can in turn negatively affect the caregiver's perceived ability to care for their loved one, and lead to poorer health outcomes overall.

Purpose

Evidence demonstrates how caregiver mental health is negatively affected, but it appears that healthcare professionals pay little to no attention to the patient's primary caregiver. There is little to no evidence that supports reliable interventions for caregiver mental health. However, research indicates that promoting caregiver mental health may in turn promote best practices for their patient.

Methods

This study includes a mixed methods survey that aims to explore the experiences and opinions of current or recent caregivers. Participants must be at least 18 years old, must be a current or recent caregiver (within the past 6 months), and must provide unpaid care consistently throughout the week. Participants will be recruited through social media platforms with the use of a visual flier explaining the survey procedures. The survey was developed through Qualtrics and is composed of 10 questions based on previous assessments as well as questions written by the authors in order to obtain accurate findings related to the research question.

Findings

We are currently in the process of collecting data and will present our findings later in the semester.

Contribution to Discipline

We anticipate that caregivers would benefit from additional interventions that would in turn make them more confident and competent caregivers. Occupational therapy is a broad field that has the ability to work in many different settings. We hope that our findings will support an emerging area of practice for occupational therapists to provide services directly to caregivers to address mental health needs and promote caregiver self-efficacy.

Professional Writing

Following data collection and analysis, we plan to submit for publication.