

The Needs of Caregivers for Recently Hospitalized Older Adults with Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus

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BACKGROUND

- Older adults with Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus (T2DM) are more frequently hospitalized than other populations due to lack of care and management of the disease.
- Caregivers play a crucial role in the management of older adults with Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus (T2DM).
- Caregivers of older adults with T2DM often have poor mental well-being due to the stress of being a caregiver.
- Caregiver burden can lead to lower quality of life.
- Studies investigating the needs of caregivers for recently hospitalized older adults with T2DM are limited.

PURPOSE

To identify the needs and experiences of caregivers of recently hospitalized older adults with T2DM from their perspective.

METHODS

Design: Telephone and in-person interviews with caregivers for recently hospitalized older adults with T2DM were conducted.

Participants and Setting: Caregivers of hospitalized older adults (≥ 55 years of age) with T2DM were recruited at Penn Presbyterian Medical Center. Once consented, caregivers scheduled an interview either via telephone or in-person.

Data Collection and Analysis: Subjects were interviewed using a semi-structured interview guide with open-ended questions. Interviews were digitally recorded and professionally transcribed. Transcripts were uploaded to ATLAS.ti to organize and retrieve data. Similar codes were identified to create themes and subthemes.

FINDINGS

CAREGIVER CHARACTERISTICS (N = 20)

Age (range)	38-69	Education, %	
Female, %	75	High school	46
Race, %		Some college	23
Black	92	Associates	8
White	8	Bachelors	23
Asian	0		
Current Marital status, %		Employment Status, %	
Married	15	Retired	15
Widowed	0	Employed	62
Single	77	Unemployed	15
Divorced	8	LOA	8
		DM, %	15

MAJOR THEMES & SUBTHEMES

Challenges

Patient
Caregiver
Social Factors

Co-diagnoses
to TD2M

Role Itself

Obligation
Full-time Role

Role Preparation
Prior Experience

SELECT QUOTES

"Yeah, it's just there are too many things right now to have to balance, and I don't want anything to happen to him."

"It's an overwhelming situation amongst all of the other things that my husband has. I think diabetes is actually the least of his health issues. Prior to the other health issues that are currently going on he was not too bad. Diabetes didn't really affect him."

"Whenever he needs me I'm there. Morning, noon, middle of the night. No timeframe."

"It must be done. That's my parent. It must be done. She needs help. She helped me as a kid. It's my turn to help her."

"...it's my mother. And I feel that this is something I need to do for her."

"...sometimes it's not so easy, some days are worse than others. But you gotta do what you gotta do, and you got to try to make the best."

"I'm cooking meals and bringing them to the third floor. I do all the housework, all the cooking, all the cleaning and washing clothes, so it's very time-consuming. At nighttime I'm just totally exhausted."

"I can't do this. I can't function during the day and be up all night."

CONCLUSION

Caregivers of recently hospitalized older adults with T2DM were interviewed to explore the needs of these caregivers. Our findings provide an understanding of experience, tasks, and needs of caregivers for older adults with T2DM. The study revealed that many caregivers feel that caretaking is an obligation and a full-time role. Although many of the caregivers did not identify T2DM as the main concern due to co-diagnoses, the most pertinent patient and caregiver challenges identified include diet, many responsibilities, and time-management.

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