

Family Caregivers' Adjustment Problems in Caring for Stroke Patients*

Sineenuch Ckumdee, M.N.S. **

Manee Arpanantikul, Ph.D. (Nursing) ***

Yupapin Sirapo-ngam, D.S.N. (Adult Health Nursing) ****

Abstract : Objective: To investigate adjustment problems faced by stroke patients' family caregivers.

Design : Qualitative research.

Implementation : The subjects were 10 purposively sampled family caregivers of stroke patients. The sampled caregivers were willing to participate in this study. Data were collected through an individual information questionnaire and 2 in-depth interviews. The two interviews and the field observation were tape-recorded. The recorded data were then transcribed and analysed using Content Analysis approach.

Results : The study showed 6 major problems confronting relatives caring for stroke patients: reluctant acceptance, emotional outbursts, problems avoidance, avoidance of dependence on others, attempts to cope with their changed roles and responsibilities and physical adaptations.

Recommendations : Nurses are supposed to be aware of the adjustment problems encountered by relatives who take care of stroke patients, in their varying contexts. The information obtained from this study could be used for the purpose of planning or preparing family caregivers before the patients are discharged. More importantly, regular follow-ups on the family caregivers are recommended so that their caregiving performance can be monitored and proper advice can be duly provided.

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** Registered nurse, Ramathibodi Hospital and Master nursing student, Master of Nursing Science Program in Adult Nursing, Ramathibodi School of Nursing, Faculty of Medicine Ramathibodi Hospital, Mahidol University

*** Corresponding Author, Associate Professor, Ramathibodi School of Nursing, Faculty of Medicine Ramathibodi Hospital, Mahidol University, E-mail: manee.arp@mahidol.ac.th

**** Associate Professor, Ramathibodi School of Nursing, Faculty of Medicine Ramathibodi Hospital, Mahidol University