

Senile Dementia Caregivers ' worries in Japan

For a family coping with a senile dementia sufferer, worries can seem endless: coping with symptoms, planning for the future, establishing a workable system of care-giving. The objectives of this study were to determine the main worries of care-givers, clarify the tendencies and features of their concerns, and establish the main issues to be addressed. The study analyzed 3669 calls received by the Aichi Branch of the Senile Dementia Sufferers and Family Support Group over a period of 6 years, 2 months. The results showed: 91.1% of callers were female and 60.3% were in their 40s or 50s. In analyzing callers' relationships to the cared-for person, the most, 43.2%, were from a daughter of the sufferer, 29.0% were from a daughter-in-law, and 10.2% from their wife. Over this six-year period, the number of calls from a daughter-in-law halved, while calls from a daughter doubled. Calls that exceeded 30 minutes in length occupied 35.1% of all calls, while calls of 10 minutes or less occupied only 16.9%. Of the two main areas of complaint, 21.8% were about dementia symptoms, and 17.6% concerned relationship difficulties. Of the latter, 37.7% of these complaints concerned the lack of understanding of relatives about the situation. Conclusion: It was found that a family who provides care to a senile dementia sufferer had worries not only about the symptoms of dementia, but also about their relationships with other people, in particular, relationships with relatives.

Keywords: Senile dementia, Care-givers, Telephone support