

## Improving Dementia Care: Insights from audit on evaluation of caregivers' needs

Aimi Izwani Mohd Nazli, Yit Tyse Ooi, Ahmad Salahuddin Mustafa, Ruzita Jamaluddin  
Department of Psychiatry, Hospital Tuanku Fauziah, Ministry of Health Malaysia

### INTRODUCTION

- Dementia is a syndrome characterized by diverse behavioral, cognitive, and emotional impairments.
- Caring for dementia patients poses significant challenges to caregivers and may lead to impairment in their quality of life.
- Previous reviews on the topic suggest prevalence of dementia caregivers experienced significant levels of burden increased with time.
- The audit standards were obtained from Malaysian Clinical Practice Guidelines Management of Dementia (2nd Edition) which include the following: An evaluation of the caregiver's needs should be carried out on a routine basis and multi-component caregiver intervention should be individualized and intensive to meet the needs of patients and their caregivers.

### METHODOLOGY

- January 2021 – March 2021: Medical records of dementia patients seen were collected and analysed
- Principal outcome measure: Percentage of dementia caregivers who received evaluation on their needs during routine outpatient consultation
- April 2021: Multilevel interventions were done
- May 2021 – July 2021: medical records of different dementia patients seen, and similar principal outcome was measured

### RESULTS

A total of 25 records of dementia patients were audited:

- no evaluation was performed on dementia caregivers' needs during routine clinic setting

Reasons cited include:

- no formal training on documentation on caregivers' needs
- no proper separate records kept for the caregivers

Multilevel interventions were done which include:

- Implementing the use of validated scales as screening tools (Zarit Burden Interview and Validated Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale).
- Simplified checklist for caregivers' intervention was made into a stamp for documentation in dementia patient's medical record.
- Regular briefing / continuous medical education (CME) for psychiatric residents on evaluation of dementia caregivers' needs.

Post intervention revealed:

- Different 25 dementia caregivers had received clinical evaluation that were properly documented in the patient's medical notes (100%)
- Majority of the caregivers were: females, Malay Muslims, secondary education, unemployed (from B40 group) and did not receive any help while taking care of the patient
- 52% of the caregivers felt some degree of burden (mild-to-moderate burden -36%, moderate-to-severe burden-16%)
- 12% were at risk of depression

### DISCUSSION

- The use of validated screening tools for dementia caregivers with simplified checklist for caregivers' intervention should be used as routine clinical practice to allow necessary interventions to the caregivers.
- Regular briefing/CME for psychiatric residents on the use of screening tools and simplified intervention checklist for dementia caregivers should be provided
- A cyclical audit to determine the sustainability of the intervention modalities may be performed