

A PILOT STUDY ON A COLLABORATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM BETWEEN PSYCHO-GERIATRIC WARD AND COMMUNITY PSYCHIATRIC SERVICE FOR CAREGIVERS OF SUICIDAL ELDERLY

W.C. Wong

School of Science and Technology, The Open University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, China

Caregivers experience great stress when their old relatives have attempted suicide, are diagnosed with depression and are discharged after hospitalization. The stress is partly induced by the lack of elderly suicidal precaution knowledge and skills. Actually, caregivers need support during and particularly, after patients' hospitalization. A collaborative education program is conducted for those caregivers during and after patients' hospitalization.

Objectives: The pilot study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of a collaborative education program in term of feedbacks from community suicidal precaution nurses (CSPN) and caregivers.

Method: A convenience sample of eight caregivers of patients who presented with suicidal idea or attempted suicide before current admission, and were diagnosed with depression in a study ward were recruited. Knowledge and theory about elderly suicide and caring skill were taught by the psycho-geriatric ward nurse during patient hospitalization. When patient was discharged, the CSPN were liaised. They would help caregivers transforming the theory into practice at their home, and then reinforce their suicidal precaution skills. The effectiveness of the collaborative education program was evaluated by feedbacks from CSPN and caregivers.

Results: The CSPN agreed that the collaborative program was useful and practical, which bridged caregivers' knowledge gap. The program provided a continuous support to caregivers before and after patients' discharge. The caregivers expressed that the program was satisfactory and met their needs.

Conclusion: The collaborative program was effective in providing continuous support on practicing the suicidal precaution skill among the caregivers.