

Effects of telephone-based support group program for family caregivers of elders

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Purpose

- To develop a telephone-based support group program for family caregivers of elders and to identify its effects on perceived health, depression, caregiving burden and satisfaction.

Methods

- Design :** A non-equivalent control pre-post study
- Subjects :** A non-equivalent control pre-post design was used. Participants were recruited from self-help groups in 3 long-term care agencies and were assigned to the experimental group (n=16) or control group (n=19) receiving usual care. For the experimental group, the telephone-based support group program, consisting of self-help group activity in small group, was given for 8 weeks. Outcomes included changes in perceived health, depression, caregiving burden and satisfaction.
- Data Analysis :** Using Fisher's exact test and Mann-Whitney U-test with SPSS 21.0.

Results

◆ Homogeneity test for general characteristics between experimental and control groups

Variables		Experimental Mean±SD	Control Mean±SD	X ²	p
Caregiver characteristics					
Sex	Female	16(100)	19(100)		
Age(year)	Mean±SD	55.16±8.72	53.84±10.10	-.465	.642
education level	<Middle school	7(43.8)	7(36.8)	.173	.739
	≥High school	9(56.3)	12(63.2)		
Religion	Buddhism	11(68.8)	10(52.6)	.940	.491
	Others	5(31.3)	9(47.4)		
Occupation status	Yes	9(56.3)	8(42.1)	.274	.738
	No	7(43.8)	11(57.9)		
Relationship with elders	Daughter-in-law	10(62.5)	15(78.9)	.650	.462
	Others	6(37.5)	4(21.1)		
Living together with elders	Yes	12(75)	14(73.7)	.008	1.000
	No	4(25)	5(26.3)		
Period of caregiving(month)	Mean±SD	95.63±99.11	75.05±58.29	-.415	.687
Time of caregiving(hour/day)	Mean±SD	13.69±9.03	11.58±5.80		
Caregiver recipient characteristics					
Sex	Male	5(31.3)	4(21.1)	.473	.700
	Female	11(68.8)	15(78.9)		
Age	Mean±SD	82.25±6.97	81.00±7.18		
Education level	<Elementary school	11(68.8)	17(89.5)	2.331	.207
	≥Middle school	5(31.3)	2(10.5)		
Number of chronic disease	Mean±SD	2.38±1.54	2.21±0.86		

◆ Homogeneity test for variable between experimental and control groups

Variables	Experimental Mean±SD	Control Mean±SD	Z	p
Perception of health	8.44±1.86	8.37±1.61	-.278	.781
Depression	14.13±4.01	14.84±4.13	-.599	.549
Burden of Caregivers	75.13±16.21	74.21±20.31	-.182	.855
Satisfaction of Caregivers	45.13±6.35	42.89±7.87	-1.144	.252

◆ The differences between Experimental and control groups and variables after program

After 8 weeks intervention, the experimental group had a significantly increase perceived health ($Z=-1.699$, $p=.009$) and caregiving satisfaction ($Z=-2.390$, $p=.017$) than the control group. Within the experimental group, there was a significant decrease in depression ($Z=-2.261$, $p=.024$) scores but not the caregiving burden.

Variables	Experimental Mean±SD	Control Mean±SD	Z	p
Perception of health	9.13±1.54	8.31±1.11	-1.699	0.09
Depression	14.06±5.00	16.95±4.38	-2.261	.024
Burden of Caregivers	71.50±19.03	76.11±21.18	-.994	.320
Satisfaction of Caregivers	47.50±6.79	42.53±7.45	-2.390	.017

Conclusion

The results indicate that a telephone-based support group program is effective increasing perceived health and caregiving satisfaction, and decreasing depression. Therefore, it can be useful utilized in the field of nursing for family caregivers of elders.