

Journal of Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine Forecast

Importance of Caregivers Training as Predictor of Outcome in Stroke Survivors at Low Resource Setting

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Editorial

Stroke is the leading cause of adult disability in the world. Many variables have an impact on disability and quality of life after stroke including age, comorbidities, severity of neurological deficit, state of mind and social risk [1].

Predicting functional outcome in stroke is challenging to most clinicians, partly because of the complexity of the condition and also because of the lack of validated prognostic models [2]. One of the important predictor of outcome is post-acute care management at low resource outlet. Many patients failed to accommodate the post-acute care facilities due to resource constraint. These prematurely discharged patients are grossly neglected at home and community. Structured training of caregiver provided during discharge of hospital admitted stroke patient has positive effect on the outcome of survivor [3]. Unfortunately post-acute care management in a developing country do not have facilities for training of caregivers.

Stroke has a profound effect on the lives of patients, their spouses and family members. These effects include role and relationship changes, psychological distress and the challenge of coping with long-term disability [4,5].

A single-center individually randomized trial reported that the London Stroke Carers Training Course (LSCTC), a structured competency-based training program, decreased caregiver burden and anxiety, and improved psychological outcomes for patients. Overall costs were reduced, due largely to earlier discharge in the LSCTC group compared with usual care [6,7].

So the importance of training in problem-solving techniques can help family members provide effective support in the home environment. Additional teaching focuses on the dissemination of knowledge about strokes, their consequences, and use of medications, stroke prevention, and other care aspects [7]. Evidence now exists that both education and counseling significantly improve caregiver knowledge and stabilize some aspects of family functioning. Family education has been found to contribute to the long term maintenance of rehabilitation gains [8-10].

Caregivers should be provided with a variety of methods of training based on their specific needs, cognitive capability, and local resources; Training may be provided in individual or group format, and in community-based programs. Hospital based rehabilitation management of stroke survivors are inadequate and not cost effective for most of the patients but thousands of inadequately treated patients are discharged home without any training to the caregivers. Structured training of caregivers is essentially needed at low resource outlet in developing country and should be emphasized in stroke rehabilitation protocol.

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Received Date: 04 Mar 2018

Accepted Date: 19 Mar 2018

Published Date: 23 Mar 2018

Citation: Rahman S. Importance of Caregivers Training as Predictor of Outcome in Stroke Survivors at Low Resource Setting. *J Phys Rehabil Med Forecast*. 2018; 1(1): 1002.

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