

Qualitative study on Experiences and challenges perceived by informal caregivers of Elders in Batticaloa District

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The global and national ageing population has led to much health, social and economic concerns. Increased prevalence of long-term disability in the elderly population requires formal or informal care giving by the care givers. The study is aimed at exploring the experiences and challenges perceived by care givers of elders in Batticaloa district, Sri Lanka. This study used qualitative approach. In-depth interviews were conducted using semi structured interview guide in a sample of 20 purposely selected caregivers of elders, attending in selected primary care centers in the district. Data were transcribed and analysed using content analysis method. In this study, majority of care givers (19/20) were females. Among them fourteen were daughters and five were spouses of the elders. Three major themes were emerged from the qualitative data. Care givers perceived that care giving as an activity of ‘happy and blessing’ while they experienced ‘high prioritization for activities of daily living and low for entertainment and recreational activities’. In addition, ‘financial crisis and unemployability were the challenges during their process of care giving. Encouragement for informal care giving is essential with provision of adequate recreational opportunities along with financial upliftment for care givers. Informal care giving needs to be professional with appropriate training in order to overcome the challenges.

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