

Addressing Family Caregiver Needs

Carol J. Farran, DNSc, RN, FAAN
Professor, College of Nursing and
Principal Investigator



IT'S HOW MEDICINE

SHOULD BE

Who, What, Where, When of Family Caregiving

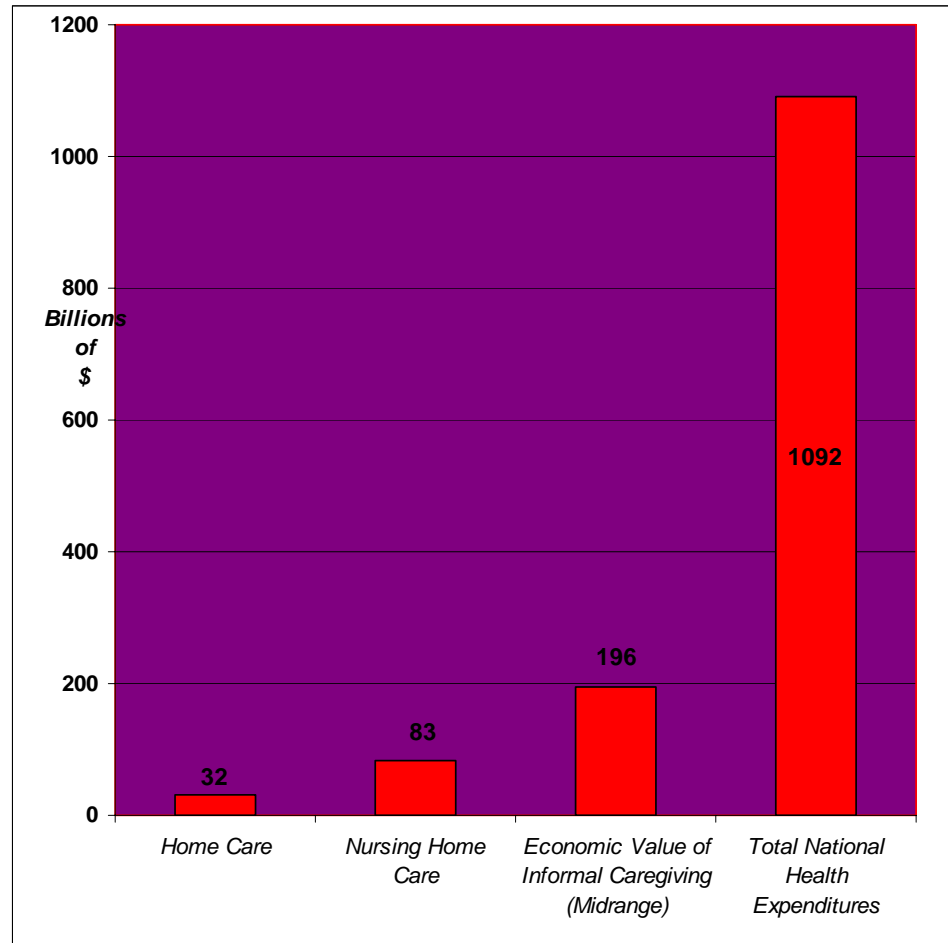
- 23% of all households in US providing care to elderly person
- 75% of caregivers are females
- Average hours of care: 18 hours/week
- Over 4 million provide 40 hours/week

- Family life
- Leisure time
- Work life
- Personal finances

- Mental health and burden
 - Increased stress
 - 14-81% at risk for developing depressive disorders

- Physical health
 - more physical symptoms
 - poorer self-rated health
 - greater use of medications
 - greater changes in immune function
 - increased time for wound healing
 - **higher mortality risks**

Economic Value of Family Care



- Provide two-track education and support
 - Care receiver needs
 - Caregiver needs
- Expand caregiving skills
- Promote caregiver health

What do Caregivers Need?

- Time for self
- Respite care
- Assistance with housekeeping
- Hands-on assistance with care
- Financial support
- Central source of information

- Information about the disease
- Personal care issues
- Behaviors associated with dementia
- Self-care
- Family issues
- Finding/Using community services
- Legal/Financial assistance

Why is Knowledge Not Enough?

- Research suggests that skill building interventions more effective
- Skills needed by caregivers are varied but address:
 - Care receiver needs
 - Caregiver needs

- Dealing with cognitive decline
- Responding to activity of daily living needs
- Addressing difficult behaviors and emotional responses

- Transform knowledge into “doing”
- Have personal characteristics and behaviors that are different
 - Sensitive to their family member needs
 - Understand complexity of the disease
 - Acknowledge family member strengths
 - Know that their behaviors make a difference
 - Make integrated connections
 - Use creative, flexible and persistent approaches

Skills to Address Caregiver Needs

- Dealing with change
- Managing competing responsibilities
- Providing a broad spectrum of care
- Finding and using resources
- Dealing with emotional/physical responses to care

- Transform knowledge into “doing”
- Have personal characteristics and behaviors that are different
 - Acknowledge and accept changes
 - Balance responsibilities
 - Capitalize on their own and others’ strengths
 - Use good negotiation skills
 - Use creative, flexible and persistent approaches
 - Know when to “draw the line”
 - Integrate “self-care” into their lives

What Self-Care Skills are Necessary?

- Mental health
 - Setting limits
 - Taking time for self
- Physical health
 - Addressing own health needs
 - Increasing physical activity
- Social health
 - Maintaining contacts
 - Valuing relationships
- Spiritual health
 - Maintaining sense of hope and finding meaning
 - Connecting with larger purpose

- ***Purpose of trial:*** To determine if a health promotion intervention can help improve well-being for family caregivers of persons with AD
- ***Eligibility:*** 40 years of age or older. Providing 10 hours of care each week for at least 6 months. Willing to learn new health and caregiving skills.
- ***Duration of trial:*** Interviews and contacts in your home over a period of 18 months.

- Caryn Etkin
Project Manager
Rush University College of Nursing
600 South Paulina, Suite 1080
Chicago, IL 60612
Tel: (312) 942-5242
E-mail: Caryn_Etkin@rsh.net