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Community carer support program for Chinese dementia carers in northern Sydney local health district, NSW health, Australia

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Introduction: Due to cultural barriers, caregivers with culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds looking after people with dementia experience difficulties in their care-giving role and access to services. Carer support is important in maintaining the home-based care for people with dementia and delaying institutionalization.

Aim: To provide support to Chinese carers for people living with dementia and to describe their experience in the community carer support program.

Method: Monthly career support program were conducted after the Community Carer Coaching Projects since April 2013 with the aim to translate knowledge into practice. Data was collected during the monthly meetings. NVivo and thematic analysis were used to analyse the data.

Results: One male and 19 female Chinese carers participated in monthly carer support program (n=20). Sixty per cent of carers were spouses and 40% were children. Six themes emerged from the analysis which included: Sharing of information and helping each other, eagerness to seek help, carers looking after their own health, acceptance and confidence in the caring task, developing person-centred caring skills and positive thinking and psychological empowerment.

Conclusion: Qualitative analysis of this carer support program showed perceived benefits of carers in improving their knowledge and skills in person-centred care and confidence in the caring task. It is important to support these carers in the community to minimize institutional care for their family members living with dementia.

Biography

Siu Wan Lisa WONG has a Master degree in Care of Elderly People and is currently enrolled in a PhD programme at the University of Technology, Sydney. Her long-held passion to improve the quality of care for elderly people, especially those living with dementia has been realised in her numerous contributions across public health and community organisations which have advanced knowledge in the area and improved access to dementia care for older people with culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, especially to the Chinese community. Her work can be evidenced by the Northern Sydney Community Award by Australian government in 2014.

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