Caregivers of Persons with Dementia

Caregiving in dementia in Hong Kong is demanding and challenging as the population continues to age and as the disease of the care-recipients progressed. A group of local clinical experts conducted a qualitative study on caregivers of persons with dementia to identify the sources of strain and unmet needs of Hong Kong Chinese caregivers. One of the major findings suggests that the manifestation of Behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia (BPSD) in care-recipients constitutes the most demanding care-giver stress and the results from this study may serve as a guide for the future services development.

In view of the increasing concern of caregiving burden in dementia, numerous studies had investigated factors associated with the burden on primary caregivers. A local study intended to identify the subjective experience in carers so as to bring new ideas in caregivers intervention. It was found that self-efficacy for responding to disruptive behaviour was an important factor in predicting caregiving burden.

Neuropsychiatric symptoms

Numerous studies suggested that neuropsychiatric (NP) symptoms influence the development of dementia among older adults. Recently a group of researchers illustrated the relationship between NP symptoms and risk of cognitive decline in Chinese older persons residing in the community by means of a population-based study. The results shed light on the interplay of effective management of NP symptoms and possible beneficial effects of cognitive function.

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Treatment modalities for Dementia

Numerous potential modalities are warranted to be explored for dementia management. Preliminary result from an on-going clinical trial in a local hospital showed that a newly developed computerized cognitive training programme significantly changes the cognitive functions in people with early dementia. And the results may be important for conceptualizing a concrete framework in computerized cognitive training application for people with dementia in local community.

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Diagnostic technique advancement

Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI) is one of the well recognized risks for clinical dementia. A prospective study was conducted to explore the applicability of a combined cognitive and clinical approach in identifying older Chinese adults at-risk of cognitive decline. The results suggested that the combined diagnostic approach may be more practical in screening for MCI participants with diverse educational and cultural background.