



# Health Promoting Behaviour and Coping in family carers of people with dementia

*“Walking stick could save frail sage from falling,  
frail sage could not save fallen walking stick”*

(Myanmar Traditional Proverb)

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*Dedicated to Minnie Dulcie Htay (1936-2011)*

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# The aims of the study



The objectives of the present study are:

- 1) To identify **associations between** specific aspects of **coping with caregiving**, and **preventive health behaviours** in caregivers of people with **dementia**
- 2) To investigate the **role of anxiety and depression** in influencing **preventive health behaviour**

We hypothesize that those **scoring high in self-efficacy** will exhibit:

- a) **higher levels of coping** and
- b) **are more likely to report practising health promoting behaviours**

# Main Findings



- In line with the study's hypothesis, **carer reporting greater ability in managing stressful events were also likely to experience high levels of anxiety and depression**
- **Lifestyle activities in carers correlated with caregiver burden**, so better the lifestyle activity (engaging in health practises) in carers the lower the caregiving burden
- **Self-efficacy** namely CG's beliefs and expectations about their success in engaging in health behaviour **correlated highly with health behaviour**

# Main Findings



- Interestingly, only **self-efficacy correlated with social support, but not actually engaging in health behaviour, and overall health**
- **Feelings of depression were associated with both health behaviour and self-efficacy, whereas anxiety correlated with self-efficacy only**

# Findings in Coping strategies



- **Higher levels of emotion-focused coping ability is positively associated with self-efficacy for health behaviour and self-care**
- **Problem focused coping strategy by family carer was positively associated with health responsibility, nutrition and spiritual growth**

# Findings in Coping Strategies



- **Avoidance coping strategy was related to lower life satisfaction and higher levels of caregiver burden**
- **Avoidance coping strategy appeared to moderate the effects of caregiver health on caregiver burden**

# Novel Findings



- An **interesting and novel finding** of the present study was a **positive relationship between caregiver's age and self-reported levels of self-efficacy** suggesting that chronological age may positively influence carers who are older, since they are more likely to believe that they can engage in health promoting behaviours
- **Chronological age** of family care was **negatively correlated with anxiety and depression**

# Discussion



- **Improving caregiver well-being and increasing caregiver's ability to care for their family members is likely to increase quality of life for the carer and the PwD**



# Discussion



- Understanding the key influences on carers' health practises is likely to contribute to the **refining and further development of theoretical models** in the area
- Understanding health behaviour in carers is likely to **increase our knowledge in relation to promoting health practises for carers** and how best to respond to ill health

# Discussion



- Health related actions can **limit some of the negative effects of family care giving in carers' health** and **guide interventions** aiming to increase physical health in family carers

# Discussion



Current findings are informative in terms of **understanding the key predictors of health behaviour in caregivers** of people with dementia



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**R E M E M B E R**

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**and ... Thank You!**

For further details of the study, please contact: [uhlahtay@hotmail.com](mailto:uhlahtay@hotmail.com)