

# Positive and negative effects of the role of caregivers essay sample

[Health & Medicine](#), [Nursing](#)



Caregivers play an imperative role in the wellbeing of ill and elderly.

Although a significant majority of society looks down upon the care-giving profession upon, they are the most pivotal segment of health care sector. In easiest terms, one can define caregiving as looking after the needs of the sick and old people. Caregiving may or may not involve monetary returns. If the caregiver is a relative then the service is free, otherwise a professional caregiver receives a monthly salary just like other professions.

A caregiver has to perform some basic services irrespective of the fact that he or she is related to the care recipient or not. A caregiver has to ensure a timely administration of medicines and other medical requirements. This is the most pivotal duty of a caregiver. Keeping the patient in a clean and hygienic condition is the second most important duty of caregivers.

Bedridden patients cannot handle the basic bodily functions and need the assistance of another person.

It is easier to find women caregivers as compared to men, especially those who care for the elderly, with a ratio of two to one (Lee, Estes & Rodriguez, 2001). The major reason behind this 'gender inequality' is that women are naturally more kind and sympathetic as compared to men. Wives are more prone to caring for their husbands as compared to their male counterparts. That is the reason why nursing homes generally have more women patients than men.

Old people need a constant helping hand and their children mostly refuse to support their parents. Aging itself is a painful process and only a professional caregiver can handle the illnesses and problems associated with old age

(Gubrium & Holstein, 2000). Problems associated with old age are varied and complex in nature. Some old people may feel distracted and anguished at the loneliness they feel. Children are busy in their own lives and they do not have time to care for their parents. This leaves them at the mercy of caregivers. The caregivers do try to help them out and give them a feeling of hope and companionship but they have great limitations as professionals.

The diseases and disabilities of the old age are not easy to treat as compared to younger patients. Osteoporosis, memory loss, depression, suicidal tendencies, and a sense of loss are some of the common problems of old age. A caregiver can both alleviate these problems and eliminate them, depending on his or her training and working methods. There is an observation by some caregiving insiders that a significant part of their community neglects the needs of their clients. If a patient would be bedridden, for example, then the caregiver would not encourage him in a full recovery. He or she would definitely care for him but will look over the psychological recovery.

This psychological cheering up is necessary as a bedridden patient cannot remain in bed for the rest of his life, except if he has a terminal illness. Most elderly people get used to remain in bed and simply refuse to get back to normal lifestyle. A good caregiver acts like a fighter and counselor to these patients. The basic premise of caregiving profession is to help people in recovery in rehabilitation. The positive effects of caregivers include a speedy recovery of the patient. If they were caring for terminally ill and paralyzed patients, then a positive impact would include an improvement in the

lifestyle of the patient. If he or she has psychological issues, there would be an improvement in that as well.

The patients depend on caregivers for their recovery. This bond and relationship they share can turn into a boon or a bane. In most cases, patients - especially older people - take the caregivers as granted. They try to center their lives on the caregivers. This might look strange but many people totally depend on their caregivers for their sustenance. This over-dependence proves extremely harmful in some cases. As women caregivers far outnumber the male ones, they also face related gender-based issues. These issues are more visible in the domestic caregiving practice where women care for their sick husbands. They do not have any training on dealing with emergencies and other medical issues. Still, some manage to care well for their husbands.

The trouble, however, appears when these wives totally devote themselves to their husbands, willingly or unwillingly. The devotion - that can also be termed as dedication - stems from their love for their spouses. More importantly, the societal ramifications and repercussions play a crucial role in determining the extent of caregiving. Because of these hidden pressures and expectations, these women spend most of their day with their husbands. So much so that in some cases, they start neglecting their domestic chores or care for the children, among other things. The psychological stress is a major problem faced by the caregivers. Feeling a sense of guilt, especially if the caregiver thinks she is responsible for the illness, can damage the whole fabric of the family.

That is the reason behind the popularity of Professional nurses in the care-giving profession. They have the training to handle complex medical situation and most of them bond well with their clients. Although there is a debate in the nursing community over care-giving, most agree that they can fare well in this profession (Zerwekh & Claborn, 1994). The major disagreement among the nursing community is the extent of caregiving. Some think that a nurse's duty is to care for the basic recovery of a patient as long as he or she is in a hospital. After the person has regained health, whatsoever maybe the extent of that, he should be discharged and the family members should take care of his needs.

This theory, which was the most dominant one until the start of twentieth century, has lost its popularity. As the nursing homes are springing up everywhere in the country, nursing community has started to rethink its concepts and practices. The dynamic shift in views is evident from the number of nursing homes. There are currently thousands of nursing homes in the United States alone. These facilities employ professional nurses as well as volunteers to care for the patients. These caregivers not only apply the standard medical procedures while treating the care recipients but also take care of the psychological and emotional needs. Even professional nurses are taking courses in psychology and understanding the mental and emotional aspects of a terminally ill or old person.

Despite all these positive aspects of caregivers, there are some major snags. Caregivers avert many disasters except in extreme conditions when patients, especially older people, try to commit suicide (Fulmer, Foreman & Walker,

2001). However, in many cases, they are also the cause for this suicidal behavior among the care recipients. Illnesses that span over years and decades damage the mental stability of these patients. As mentioned earlier, they draw their inspirations, both negative and positive, from the caregivers. If a caregiver herself is facing personal issues then it becomes a one-way traffic. The flow of negativity towards the patient increases as a caregiver would not pay any attention to the needs of the care recipient.

This negative attitude of the caregiver results in severe bouts of depression. In some cases, a caregiver taunted the patient and incited him or her to commit suicide. These types of incidents are more common if the caregiver is a relative as they are fed up with their boring and monotonous routines without any monetary or emotional rewards. Some professional caregivers are also involved in these heinous acts. Although the reason behind this sinister attitude is not any personal grievances, they still resort to blackmailing and insulting the care recipients. The professional meltdown, their own age (most caregivers are also aged themselves) or a lack of financial stability are the reasons behind this behavior.

A caregiver has to walk on a tight rope where medical issues take priority but with an emphasis on psychological upkeep. A caregiver should take care of the medical and emotional health, as most people are more concerned about their egos as compared to their health. If the caregiver is herself in need of emotional or medical guidance then she should not continue pursuing this profession. In the case of a related caregiver, other family members should chip in their efforts and participate in the whole process. Conclusively, the

paper has discussed some of the significant aspects of role of caregivers. It is hoped that the paper will be beneficial for students, teachers, and professionals in better understanding of the topic.

### References

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