

Predictor factors of perceived health in family caregivers of people diagnosed with mild or moderate Alzheimer's disease

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Caring for a person diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease has a negative impact on family caregivers' psychological health. This study examined the factors related to 'perceived health' and 'presence of new-onset mental health problems' in family caregivers of people diagnosed with mild and moderate Alzheimer's disease. A cross-sectional observational study carried out in Almeria's Healthcare District (Spain). A total of 255 family caregivers (42.4% cared for people with mild Alzheimer's disease and 57.6% cared for people with moderate Alzheimer's disease) participated in the study from January to December 2015. Mainly, caregivers were women (81.5% in the mild Alzheimer's disease group and 88.4% in the moderate Alzheimer's disease group), and their average age was 56.54 years (standard deviation (SD) = 13.13) and 54.47 years (SD = 11.71), respectively. Around 47% of the caregivers had been caring for the person with Alzheimer's between two and five years. The Goldberg General Health Questionnaire was used to measure perceived health and the presence of new-onset mental health problems. An exploratory descriptive analysis and a multivariate logistic regression analysis were conducted. For caregivers of people with mild Alzheimer's disease, 'perceived health' was related to 'perceived social support' ($r = 0.21$; $p = 0.028$), 'person's level of dependency' ($r = 0.24$, $p = 0.05$), 'severity of the person's neuropsychiatric symptoms' ($r = 0.22$; $p = 0.05$), and 'caregiver's emotional distress in response to the person's neuropsychiatric symptoms' ($r = 0.22$; $p = 0.05$). For caregivers of people with moderate Alzheimer's disease, 'perceived health' was related to 'perceived social support' ($r =$

0.31; $p < 0.01$), presence of neuropsychiatric symptoms ($r = 0.27$, $p = 0.01$), severity of the person's neuropsychiatric symptoms ($r = 0.32$, $p = 0.01$) and caregiver's emotional distress in response to the person's neuropsychiatric symptoms ($r = 0.029$; $p = 0.01$). The presence of new-onset mental health problems was detected in 46.3% ($n = 50$) of caregivers of people with mild Alzheimer's and 61.9% ($n = 91$) of caregivers of people with moderate Alzheimer's. When people are diagnosed with mild Alzheimer's disease, intervention programs for caregivers should aim to regulate emotions and promote positive coping strategies. When people are diagnosed with moderate Alzheimer's disease, intervention programs for caregivers must allow them to adapt to caregiving demands that arise with the progression of Alzheimer's disease. © 2019 by the authors.

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Alzheimer's disease

Caregiver

Mental health problems

Nursing

Perceived health

Protection

Risk

health worker

mental health

public health

regression analysis

risk assessment

adaptation

adult

Alzheimer disease

Article

caregiver

caregiver burden

caregiver support

controlled study

cross-sectional study

descriptive research

disease severity

emotional stress

exploratory research

female

Goldberg General Health Questionnaire

health status

human

major clinical study

male

mental disease

mental disease assessment

observational study

social support

Spain

aged

Alzheimer disease

caregiver

coping behavior

mental stress

middle aged

psychology

quality of life

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Aged

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Cross-Sectional Studies

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Humans

Male

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Stress, Psychological