

Role of The Interdisciplinary Team in Managing Caregiver's Stress in Multiple Sclerosis

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Introduction

Caregiver's stress¹:

- A burden arising from providing necessary care tasks to a family member with MS.
- Can be physical, psychological, emotional, social, and/or financial.
- It is both objective and perceived.
- Perceived burden correlates with risk of depression and lower quality of life.
- Almost half of caregivers experience clinical depression, 61% of intense family caregivers experience depression^{2,3}.

MS-Specific Tool To Identify Caregiver's Stress

- It is very important to provide early screening and intervention.
- The **CAREQOL-MS** is the first MS specific tool to identify caregiver's stress.
- It reliably measures the health-related quality of life of MS caregivers through four sub-scales:
 - Physical burden/global health
 - Social impact
 - Emotional impact
 - Need of help/emotional reactions
- Worse HRQL scores for caregivers correlate with increasing age of the caregivers, and increasing EDSS of the persons with MS .

Case Study

- 40 year old client with MS
- Single mother as primary caregiver
- Client uses wheelchair as primary mode of mobility and scooter for recreational use
- Client not able to feed himself because of severe tremor
- CAREQOL-MS completed by mother identified significant caregiver burden and provided us specific areas needing to be addressed

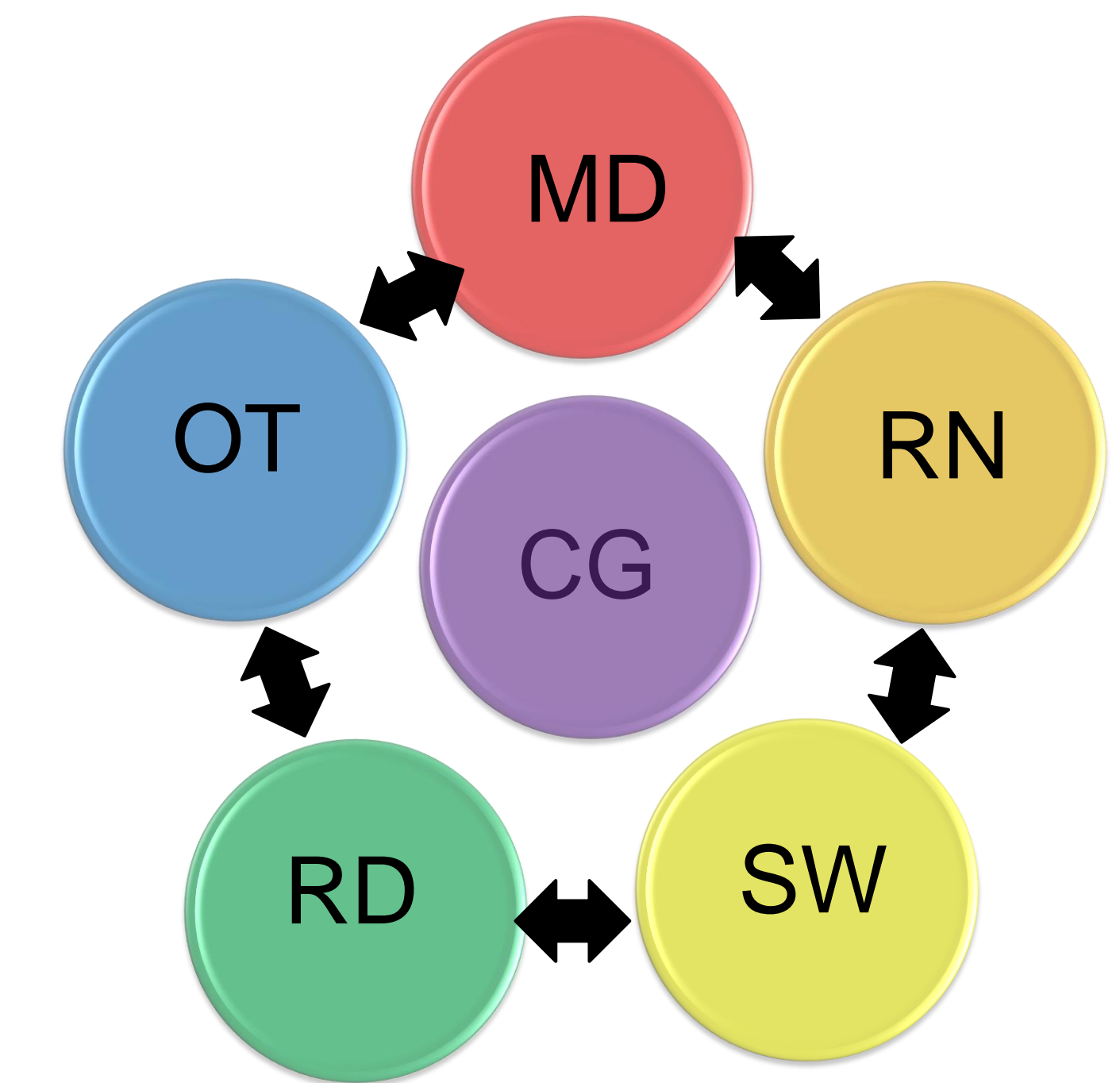


Individual Role of the Interdisciplinary Team Members in Caregiver's Stress Management

<p>Neurologist: Indicates/ identifies caregiver's burden Encourages caregiver to seek support</p>	<p>Occupational Therapist: Formal screening assessment Promote maximal independence of multiple sclerosis clients to avoid caregiver's burn out Teaches body mechanics for safe transfers Home assessment and optimal home care assistance/respite care Fatigue, stress and sleep Management Initiating discussion regarding alternative housing</p>
<p>Registered Dietitian: Meal planning and batch cooking Weight/Bowel/Bladder management of MS client Suggest healthier alternatives to frozen meals Inter-collaborating work with OT and SLP to help MS client to maintain independence in feeding</p>	<p>Registered Nurse: Screening to provide early intervention Identifying caregiver stress and making appropriate referrals to other team members Motivational interviewing to accept help from other team members Providing Education regarding symptoms and symptoms management Promoting self-care</p>
<p>Social Worker: Supportive counselling and emotional support Empowering caregivers to set boundaries with regards to their involvement Connecting with community resources, financial support resources and counseling services Supportive decision making</p>	

Issues Identified On Management CAREQOL-MS

Item 1. I worry about the thoughts regarding MS of the person whom I care	RN: Symptom management, education regarding disease progression, motivational interviewing
Item 2. Moving & travelling with the individual is complicated for me	OT: Wheelchair, vehicular modification, body mechanics for safe transfers
Item 6. Problem with feeding and meals	OT & RD: Meal planning, adapted cutlery, lift-ware spoon, getting in home care aides to feed client. Initiated urgent SLP swallowing assessment.
Item 7. I feel alone regarding my tasks of caring for, watching and supporting a person with multiple sclerosis	OT & RN: Arrangement of Respite Care, provided home care assistance for feeding.
Item 10. Lack of time for social life	SW: Arrangement of Respite Care and enrolled client with support groups
Item 13. The attitude of the person with multiple sclerosis whom I care for elicits mood changes in me	MD: Client was started on mood stabilizer



References

1. Assessment of Caregiver Burden in families of person with Multiple Sclerosis, Marijean Buhse Vol. 40 No. 1 February 2008, Journal of Neuroscience Nursing
2. Haley LaMonde, Han, Narramore & Schonwetter, 2001
3. Pochard et al., 2001; Rabow et al.

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