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Systematic Review: The Correlation Burnout Rate in Cancer Patient Caregivers

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ABSTRACT Introduction: The caregiver among cancer patients often experiences hardships while providing emotional, physical, and financial support for their family members. Cancer is one of the leading causes of death. However, due to improved cancer treatment, there is a reduced mortality rate and increased survival rate among patients with cancer, resulting in an increased and prolonged burden for both patients and caregivers. The caregiver is a professional in treating patients requiring extended outpatient care, assisting patients in their daily activities, and performing medical treatment. **Methods:** The method we used is a systematic review of the correlation between burnout rates in cancer patients' caregivers. Was also conducted a researcher's method uses a cross-sectional/study. We used 14 articles that correlated and searched the keyword cancer, patient cancer, burnout, and caregivers. **Results:** Also, the results stated that caregivers are highly related to the level of burnout; thus, research shows caregivers have low self-esteem, adverse health effects, and depression. Ultimately, there is a high correlation between burnout in caregivers and cancer patients. **Conclusion:** Caregivers play a crucial role in the management of cancer patients. Giving caregivers the social support they need, educational resources, and supporting programs may decrease burnout because they need to provide for their mental health, which correlates with low self-esteem, adverse health effects, and depression. There is great potential for improvement in the design of cancer caregiver intervention studies to plan for future implementation, so more in-depth studies on this topic are needed.

Keywords: *Cancer caregiver; burnout; stress*

INTRODUCTION

Cancer is the second leading cause of death in the world; around 8.8 million people died from cancer in 2015¹. Based on *Riset Kesehatan Dasar (Riskesdas)* data in 2013, the incidence of cancer in Indonesia is 1.4 per 1000 population, meaning that around 2 out of 1000 Indonesian people suffer from cancer. Cancer patients experience various symptoms caused by cancer and the effects of the treatment¹.

In managing cancer patients, some people are very meritorious both for the patient and for the team of health workers, whose role and condition are often neglected, especially their mental state. They are caregivers who are often family members of cancer patients. Like patients, caregivers are also affected by stress due to cancer because they face more burdensome and complicated pressures¹.

Multiple studies performed during varying stages of cancer patients' disease trajectory report that caregivers experience a significant detrimental impact on their burden, well-being, and quality of life. Mental health, anxiety, depression, physical health, and a wide range of psychosocial factors such as employment and income are also adversely affected. Unfortunately, family caregivers

receive limited guidance regarding their caregiving role and subsequently experience significant burdens².

A study investigating caregiver fatigue demonstrated a relationship to the caregiver's schedule: when the burden is higher, the fatigue is greater. When the demands on a caregiver exceed the caregiver's ability to cope, this leads to burnout, frequently manifested as fatigue. Compassion fatigue is a form of burnout. However, it addresses the condition's relational nature, whereas burnout is frequently associated with stressors. Stress develops when a person's ability to meet a circumstance's demands is inconsistent. The stressor is a human or environmental stressful occurrence. It significantly impacts mood, well-being, behavior, and health³.

Palliative care and hospice services are well known to improve caregiver well-being and satisfaction, especially at the end of life. Future interventions for caregiver fatigue should incorporate not just a physical approach but a truly multidisciplinary approach consistent with the palliative and hospice principle of treating the family unit⁴.

In addition, I want to show that Indonesia still relies a lot on family, relatives, friends, and people around to become

caregivers, and there is a lack of awareness of the mental health of these caregivers. Therefore, this systematic review aims to study the correlation between the burnout rate in cancer patient caregivers⁴.

METHOD

The method used in this research is the comprehension strategy. The data being analyzed are research results previously done and published in a journal or article. A total of 14 journals and articles are used for this research, and they can be found at Google Scholar, Pubmed, and NCBI. The keywords used to search for these journals and articles are cancer caregiver, burnout, and stress.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Cancer

Cancer is one of the leading causes of death. Due to improved cancer treatment, there is a reduced mortality rate and increased survival rate among patients with cancer. Nevertheless, it is still a life-threatening disease requiring long-term treatment. Patients with cancer experience prolonged hospitalization and absence from school or work, which increases the cost of healthcare, placing a financial burden on the family members³. Patients also need to constantly undergo intense radiotherapy and chemotherapy, in addition to experiencing cancer symptoms, which may cause fatigue, depression, and anxiety^{5,6}. As a result, they need physical, psychological, mental, and emotional support. Caregivers are required to give continuous dedication and support in order for cancer patients to reach optimal treatment³.

Caregiver

A caregiver is a person who treats patients in need of outpatient care, assists in daily activities, and helps in performing medical treatment. Caregivers are not paid as they are mainly the patients' spouses, partners, parents, or adult children. If the patient's family member is unavailable, close friends, co-workers, or neighbors can also be caregivers⁷.

The role of a caregiver is to provide physical and emotional support to the patient. This requires them to be at the patient's side most of the time to help them eat, dress up, take a bath, arrange schedules, manage insurance issues, provide transportation, and many more^{7,8}.

Though being a caregiver is a meaningful job and can give satisfaction in knowing that one's loved one is provided with the care and support they need, it can be frustrating and overwhelming⁷. This is because, on top of caring for the patient, they still have their personal life to manage^{9,10}. Caregivers often focus more on their patient's health and well-being than their own, causing them to be vulnerable to burnout, emotional tiredness, and fatigue, resulting in poor performance. Much is known about the prevalence of burnout in cancer patients. However, less is known about the prevalence of burnout in cancer patient caregivers, even though their rates of depression and anxiety are the same as and even more than those of cancer patients^{5,11,12}.

Burnout

Burnout is defined as a lack of interest and a sense of importance in doing one's usual work, often due to emotional and interpersonal stresses. Working in an environment that demands higher emotional capacity, such as being a cancer caregiver, can lead to burnout¹³.

Caregivers often experience burnout as their role is extensive, demanding, and usually done without training or resources¹³.

Increased cancer patients' dependence on their caregivers means that caregiving should be done thoroughly. This burdens the caregivers as they need to spend more time caregiving and have much less personal time to manage their physical, emotional, financial, and social conditions, all of which influence their well-being and quality of life. Some caregivers needed to leave their job to accompany patients in the hospital. They also experience less time socializing with their friends, both in real life and on social media. Some caregivers feel like caregiving is a repetitive, monotonous, and long-lasting job, with little to no time to relax, leaving them vulnerable to stress. Continuous stress can lead to burnout^{14,15}.

Burnout can influence a person's strength, mood, well-being, behavior, and health^{3,16}. Therefore, burnout is often manifested as anxiety, depression, and fatigue. These symptoms are unavoidable but treatable. Unfortunately, burnout in cancer caregivers tends to be overlooked, so less is known about its effective treatment or intervention^{5,8,15,17}.

Stress

Stress is usually experienced by caregivers who have a close relationship with the patient, such as a family caregiver¹². Caregivers experience stress when patients cannot cope with the symptoms they are experiencing. Seeing a family member suffer due to cancer influences the caregiver's emotions. Aside from that, caregivers also frequently feel emotional after hearing the news about the patient's cancer progression. The public's perceptions and high expectations towards caregivers also cause them to feel stressed. The stress experienced by caregivers gives rise to psychological symptoms such as depression, anxiety, fear, and loneliness. It can also cause psychosomatic symptoms, marital problems, and physical symptoms such as tiredness, anorexia, indigestion, constipation, serious sleeping disorders, and pain^{10,11,18,20}.

Result

The result from the article was chosen and assessed. Seventy-eight caretakers participated in this study.

Relationship with the child

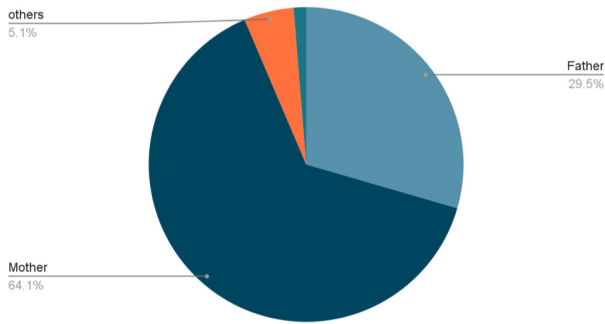


Chart 1

Number of family members living together

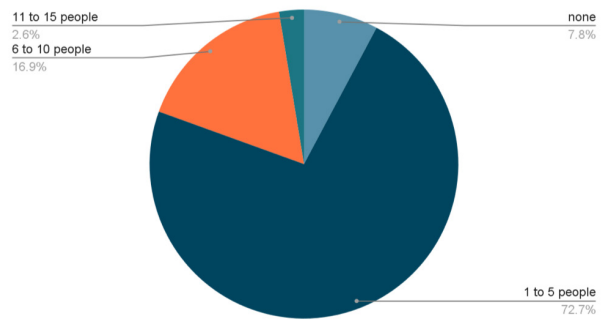


Chart 5

Marital status

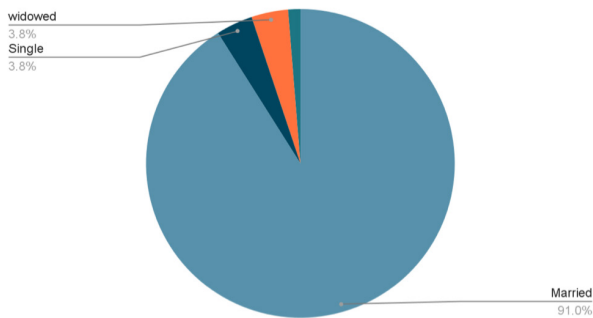


Chart 2

Length of hospital stay

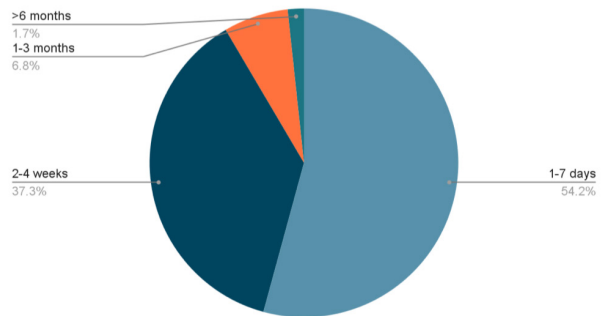


Chart 6

Caretaker education level

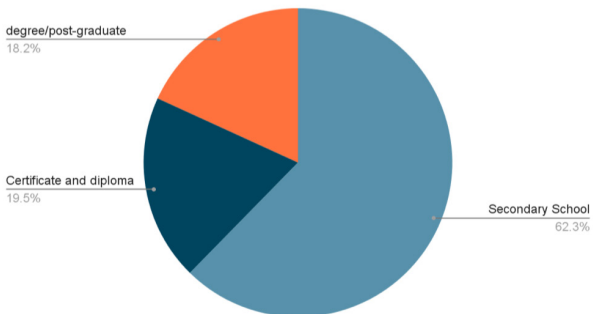


Chart 3

Salary (RM)

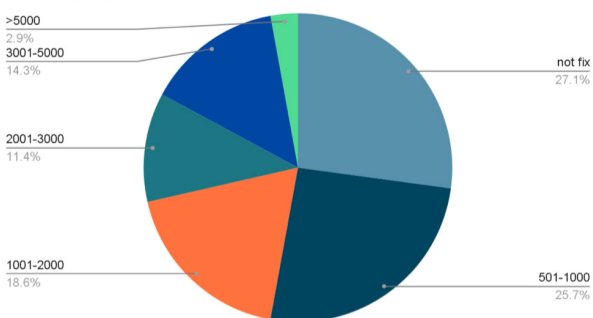


Chart 4

In Indonesia, there is still a need for efforts to increase awareness of caregiver health for cancer patients because many caregiver services are neglected or not running optimally, resulting in unresolved problems. Further research should be done, taking samples from regional and national cancer hospitals in Indonesia and hopefully providing solutions, such as counseling and assistance, to deal with caregiver burnout.

There is enormous potential for improvements in cancer caregiver intervention study design to planning for future implementations. This can open up new job opportunities with adequate human resources in Indonesia.

CONCLUSION

Caregivers play a crucial role in the management of cancer patients. Giving caregivers the social support, they need, educational resources, and supporting programs may decrease burnout. According to the 2018 Riskesdas (*Riset Kesehatan Dasar*) report, around 1,017,290 million patients suffer from cancer. Furthermore, *Jaringan Kualitas Perawatan Paliatif* reported that the highest number of patients receiving palliative care are cancer patients, at about 30%. In Indonesia, patients are mostly diagnosed with cancer at an advanced stage, leading to improper treatment and shorter life expectancy. Although cancer management has developed rapidly, patients' cure rates and life expectancy should be improved. At a time when curative treatment has not been able to provide the

expected cure and preventive efforts, both primary and secondary, have not been carried out properly so that most patients are found to be in an advanced stage, palliative care should be the only pragmatic service and a humane answer for those who suffer from diseases.

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