Innovations in Social Work Practice with Older Adults and Their Families

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Internet-based Interventions for Family Caregivers of Persons with Chronic Disease: A group intervention using technology
Several feasibility and experimental studies with family caregivers of persons with chronic disease have shown that an Internet video conferencing format for providing support group interventions benefits caregiver physical and mental health.


Social Workers Experiences


- A qualitative study of social work facilitators’ online experiences

The provision of online psychotherapeutic support groups for family caregivers was an overall positive experience for the social work therapists

Specific Themes

- Needing to adapt to specific technology while engaging group members in process
- Absence of non-verbal behavioral cues except for central active window
- Despite technical manipulation of active window and turn-taking, group members bonded as in face-to-face groups
Specific Themes continued

- Satisfaction at being able to provide a service to clients in their homes
- Experience of therapeutic effectiveness in a technology-based service delivery environment

Social Worker Statements

- “This modality can be highly effective and satisfying in meeting the needs of caregivers for support”
- “A valuable relational context could be created online”
- “An effective group experience can take place online”

Challenges & Satisfactions Using Technology In the Delivery of Health Services

- Clients/patients unfamiliarity with the technology
- Health care provider’s need to address client frustrations with technology
- Successful engagement with client despite technological barriers
Engagement in Online Group Process

Types of contact included:
- Recruitment
- Technical
- Emotional Support
- Specific Problems
- Reminders
- Referral to Other Services

Conclusion

- Training therapists to transition from in person to online virtual psychotherapy requires a focus on balancing technological competency with clinical skills
- Equivalent outcomes are achievable

A Support Group for Child Survivors of the Holocaust
Over one-and-a-half million children died in the Holocaust.

The majority of children who survived were hidden in private homes, hospitals, orphanages and convents.

Child survivors were 18 years of age or less at the time of Liberation (in 1945).

Today the eldest are in their late 70's and youngest in their mid-60's.

Common themes

- Identity
- who am I?
- fear, loss

- Heroism and resiliency
- Impact of aging
- Culturally sensitive care
 Fewer studies and less research done on child survivors

 Each has a unique story of pain and survival

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**Diverse Groups with Similar Outcomes**

- Preventative/proactive approaches to community-based clients
- Meeting the needs of younger clients
- Groups have empowered members to make long-lasting connections

Questions? Discussion