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La influencia del acompañamiento del terapeuta ocupacional sistémica sobre el paciente joven Alzheimer y sobre su familia Impact of assistance from a systemic family therapy for young Alzheimer disease clients and their families

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Alzheimer disease has become one of the first worldwide health concerns. Presently in France, the number of people living with dementia is estimated around 850 000 persons (CNAM, 2008). Although the majority is old, part of the population living with Alzheimer disease is less than 65 years old. The number of these young Alzheimer patients is not well known but is estimated around 8 000 in France. The Alzheimer disease development slowly restrains the person's autonomy and leads to the increase of carers roles, especially within the family (Cavrois, Rousseau, 2008). Altered family balance leads to role readjustment and task redistribution within the family (Colloque France Alzheimer, 2007).

A research engaged within the Memory Ressource Research Centre and the Handicap and Family Consultation seeks to evaluate whether the assistance from a systemic family therapy with young Alzheimer disease clients and their family helps to decrease the impact of the handicap on the family and limits stress consequences within the family. The research team is multidisciplinary and includes systemic trained OTs.

Research Tools:

- Interview need's family, different roles in the family, decision making structure, family environment.
- Measures of stress, depression, burden, coping styles.
- Observation during the interview

Measures instruments:

- Measures of stress and depression : Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (Zigmond & Snaith, 1983)
- Measure burden : Evaluation of burden (Zarit et al., 1980)
- Coping styles : Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scales - III (Olson et al., 1985)
- Family environment : Evaluation of family system (FAST, Gehring, 1984)

Sample : 10 families

The focus of the therapy is on restructuring relationships to foster the enhanced well-being of the caregiver, care recipient, and the broader family system.

We hope a significant reduction in familial stress, depressive, burden and a modification of the coping style.

Family members are engaged in a re-evaluation of their roles and decision-making structures.

The occupational therapist systemic work with all familie and suggest the development of educational programs to teach caregivers, other close family members, and the optimal way to communicate with their demented partner.

