

Stories from the hidden enablers: Doing occupations with/or on behalf of elderly parents

Fanny Alexandra Jakobsen, Kjersti Vik, Borgunn Ytterhus
Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim, Norway

Introduction: As the population is getting older, the balance between generations change. National and international health policy promotes older people living at home, leading to home- rehabilitation becoming a more common intervention. Next of kin are therefore considered as important resource in health care. Their involvement and contribution of care they provide today is necessary for the sustainability of the welfare state.

Objectives: The aim of this study is to gain knowledge of how daughters and sons describe their shared occupations together with and/or on behalf of their parents who have participated in home- based rehabilitation.

Method: Eight daughters and two sons participated in individual interviews. The data analysis was inspired by a constructivist grounded theory approach.

Practical implications: Experience and knowledge from the family member's perspective can provide insight to occupational therapists who work with home-based rehabilitation. Preliminary findings indicate that the children do activities for their parents several years before the parent participate in home- based rehabilitation. In addition, the children also do activities for their parents even if the parents have not asked for help.

Conclusion: Occupational therapists need to be aware that they have a responsibility to facilitate interaction with next of kin.