



DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY AMONG CAREGIVERS OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS WITH NEURODEVELOPMENTAL DISORDERS IN A GOVERNMENT TERTIARY HOSPITAL DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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Background

The care of a child with neurodevelopmental disorder is a big challenge and these caregivers are at increased risk of suffering from mental health disorders like anxiety and depression. The mental health of caregivers plays a major role in a child and even in family outcomes. This study provided a timely screening of caregivers for depression and anxiety.

Objective

To determine the burden of COVID-19 related mental health problems such as anxiety and/or depression among caregivers of children and adolescents with neurodevelopmental disorders in a government tertiary hospital

Methods

This is a cross-sectional study that was conducted as face-to-face session at the Out-patient Department of Philippine Children's Medical Center. Caregiver data sheet and Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale-Pilipino (HADS-P) forms were given to eligible caregivers. Data was described using means and standard deviations, variables were analyzed using regression analysis.

KEYWORDS: anxiety, depression, caregivers, neurodevelopmental disorders, COVID-19, mental health

Results

A total of 102 caregivers were included. The prevalence of significant risk for anxiety disorder among caregivers is 34.31% (n=35), 1.96% (n=2) for depression and 3.92% (n=4) for both anxiety and depression. Using logistic regression, marital status of common law partner has significant association with depression (P-value .023) and anxiety (P-value .004); female sex has also significant association with depression (P-value .024) and anxiety (P-value .004). The number of household members has direct association to significant risk for both anxiety and depression (P-value .051, Coefficient beta .220).

Conclusion

Thirty five caregivers (34.31%) were identified to have significant risk for anxiety, two were identified to have significant risk for depression and four caregivers for both anxiety and depression. Female sex and marital status of common law partnership are associated with 2-3 times of having significant risk for anxiety or depression. The number of household members is correlated with having increased significant risk of having both anxiety and depression.

Recommendations

Screening of caregivers using appropriate tests would yield to identifying caregivers at significant risk for anxiety and depression and further create intervention programs.