

Caregiver Telephone Assessment and Skill-Building Kit

Principal Investigator: Tamilyn Bakas, DNS

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Abstract

Stroke is the number one cause of serious, long-term disability in the United States, with most stroke survivors under the care of family members. Family caregivers are at risk for depression, psychosocial impairments, and mortality as a result of providing care. The lack of necessary skills is hypothesized to play a key role in negative caregiver outcomes. The ultimate career goal of the applicant is to become an independent investigator developing and evaluating intervention programs aimed at improving outcomes of family caregivers in chronic illness. Through a structured training plan consisting of formal coursework, workshops, conferences, and close mentoring by seasoned nurse researchers, the K01 Mentored Research Scientist Award will provide the applicant with the opportunity to develop and pilot-test the Telephone Assessment and Skill-building Kit (TASK), an individualized 8-week intervention program geared toward reducing depression and improving general health in stroke caregivers. Specific aims of the research plan are to: (a) gather evidence of content validity (accuracy, clinical feasibility, and theoretical relevance) for the TASK program components from experts, (b) gather evidence of the accuracy, feasibility, and acceptability of the TASK intervention program and the attention control group content from 6 family caregivers, and (c) conduct a pilot study with 46 caregivers randomized either to the intervention or attention control group to explore the effectiveness of the TASK intervention in enhancing stroke caregiver outcomes. The intervention will be guided by a conceptual model derived from Lazarus' theory of stress and coping and Mishel's theory of uncertainty in illness. Caregiver outcomes will be measured at baseline (1-2 weeks after the stroke survivor is discharged home), and again at 4, 8, and 12 weeks after baseline. Findings will serve as preliminary data for an R01 application to test the effectiveness of the TASK program in a large randomized clinical trial.

Performance Site(s)

Indiana University School of Nursing
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