Caregiving for a better life at home with Alzheimer’s disease

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Methodology

- A qualitative approach and analysis:
  - Follow up and caser analysis of granted initiatives as part of a call for projects « Promoting daily good practice in Dementia care at home”
  - Multiprossional focus groups (home care services and others)
  - Field observations and meetings completed by interviews.

Key issues

- Beyond daily life support, some home carers do more to help people to maintain their quality of life and social life while taking into account the informal carers’ needs.

- Give a report on the richness and diversity of such initiatives.
Home care and Dementia - Main Challenges to cope with

- **Difficulties with the persons themselves**
  - Communicate (to understand and to make yourself understood) and establish / maintain an interaction
  - Cope with memory problems, passivity, anxiety and agitation (identify and understand them, find an appropriate answer)
  - Act and decide in complex situations, in an unpredictable and unsettled context

- **Difficulties with the relatives**
  - Find a right place in the « relatives / person with dementia » system, take into account the relatives’ needs while remaining focused on the user as first partner
  - Cope relatives’ attitudes and demands, sometimes incongruous or in contradiction with professional moral codes.

- **Difficulties due to the work**
  - The home care sector is facing a major crisis (status and financing)
  - Fragility of the work (isolation of staff, risks of discontinuity of the help, etc.)

➤ A general context of doubt and apprehension
2 main ways of working

I. Implement new ways of working and different kind of meaningful activities to avoid isolation at home and to give more sense and life to the daily life

II. Strengthen competencies and support staff
I. Implement new ways of working and various activities to avoid isolation at home and give more sense and life to the daily life (1)

- Bring more life to daily life at home
  - Encourage participation to daily life activities
  - Propose « activities » at home
  - Help to remain a host (relatives, friends or peers)

- Implement outdoor social life opportunities
  - Promote access to leisure and community life
    - Individual or group outings in cultural and sport facilities
  - Make local solidarity alive
  - Visits and activities with volunteers, neighbours
I. Implement new ways of working and various activities to avoid isolation at home and to give more sense and life to the daily life (2)

- Listen and Support family caregivers
  - Regular dialogues and meetings
  - Respite (time together or separate time)
II. Strengthen competencies and support staff

- Training
  - Contents:
    - On more targeted
    - On social and relational aspects
    - A balance between operational and theoretical tools
  - Organisations:
    - For homehelp carers together with managers or with other professionals
    - Practical training to learn to lead activities (internship in a day care center …)

- Long term support
  - Collective support (group on practice analysis, etc.) combined with individual support (cellule d’écoute with a psychologist, etc.)
  - Start up a Collective thinking process (ethics committee, working group, etc.)
Concluding remarks

- Reference points for practices
  - Professionals trained, coached, supported
  - Build a common culture and a cooperative dynamic within a service and with all the professionals involved
  - Develop these initiatives in a societal perspective: Life at home/ be part of the community.
Thank you

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