

A multidimensional support programme for family carers of persons with dementia – a 18 months randomised controlled intervention study

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Title of project or programme

A multidimensional support programme for family carers of persons with dementia – a 18 months randomised controlled intervention study

Principal Investigators of project/programme grant

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Source of funding information

The Research Council of Norway

Total sum awarded (Euro)

565000

Start date of award

01-01-2009

Total duration of award in months

48

The project/programme is most relevant to

- Alzheimer's disease and other dementias

Keywords

Dementia, RCT, nursing

Research abstract in English

Dementia is a devastating disease. It leads to helplessness, no cure exist and there is a need for good quality care to improve the patients and the carers' situation and to delay nursing home placement. Psychosial intervention programmes carried out by highly academic educated therapist have shown to be effective. If a majority of patients and carers should have access to such intervention it is essential to show that the intervention are effective when carried out by nurses in primary health care. This is a 18 months randomised controlled study including 320 dyads of persons with dementia and their primary carers from 16 municipalities. They will be recruited from memory clinics, out patients clinics in geriatrics and old age psychiatry, general practitioners and district nurse offices. Randomisation will take place at municipality level. To ensure recruitment only municipalities with more than 300 persons with dementia will be considered for inclusion. Half of participants (in 50% of the municipalities) will receive a specially designed support programme and the other half will receive care as usual. Eight research nurses will be trained and carry out the intervention. The intervention towards the carers consists of four individual counseling sessions, two half days educational courses, participating in eight groups meetings to learn a problem solving method and counseling throughout the study. The patients will take part in the counseling sessions and participate in eight support group meetings. The effect will be measured at patients level with scales measuring depressive and behavioural symptoms and quality life. Survival and nursing home placement will be secondary measurements. At carer level the effect will be measured with a burden scale, time to assist the patients and QoL. Measures of effects at societal level is nursing home placement and use of health resources.

Lay summary