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An assesment of the psychological support given and received by home-based caregivers working in the North West province.

Mckenzie, Gillian

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ABSRACT

The primary aim of this study was to identify and assess the type of, and level of emotional and psychological support offered by home-based caregivers within a Home Community-Based Care Programme, and to explore the type of issues that home-based caregivers are dealing with on a day-to-day basis. A secondary aim of this study was to evaluate and determine the level of emotional and psychological support that is being offered and received by home-based caregivers themselves, as well as the type of training that they receive. Data was collected using the semi-structured interview method of data collection from a sample of 16 participants. The data was analysed using both quantitative and qualitative techniques. The main findings were that the emotional and psychological services being offered by the participating home-based caregivers to the beneficiaries/clients of the Tapologo HIV/AIDS Programme were adequate, and included the following services: providing emotional support, spiritual support, basic counselling skills such as active listening and empathy, providing pre and post-test counselling, and psychoeducation. These services are offered primarily on an individual basis, although evidence for group support being used was also indicated. Issues that the participating home-based caregivers are having to deal with on a day-to-day basis included addressing both the physical and emotional needs of clients, and helping patients to accept their illness and disease as well as dealing with the subsequent loss/losses. The type of emotional and psychological support received by the participating home-based caregivers themselves was suggested to be provided from both within and outside of the programme. The provision of support provided from within the programme was provided by the social worker/s, the sister/s in charge, the church, counsellors at Lifeline, supervisors, and colleagues. The types of emotional and psychological support received by these service providers included general counselling and emotional support, debriefing, supervision, psychoeducation, and spiritual support. Emotional support provided outside of the programme included support from family members and friends. Finally, a holistic approach to training was indicated from the data. The types of emotional and psychological training received include the provision of basic counselling skill, psychoeducational skills, and training in self-care.