Factors influencing the use and non-use of respite services by caregivers of people with dementia

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PROJECT OVERVIEW:

Background: The physical and psychological burden of providing care for someone with dementia is well established. Formal services can assist carers to support people with dementia to live at home for longer by providing a break or ‘respite’ from their responsibilities. Such an outcome is consistent with both community and government preference for older people to remain living in their own homes for as long as possible. However, despite caregivers of people with dementia indicating a need for a break, their use of respite services is often low and little is known about factors that may be associated with the non-use of different types of respite services.

Method(s): A mixed methods study is being undertaken to explore the various factors associated with the non-use of respite services by carers of people living with dementia. This study consists of 3 phases utilising Anderson’s behavioral model of service use as a framework for analysis:
1. A systematic review of the literature regarding factors associated with the non-use of respite services by carers of people with dementia.
2. Qualitative research with carers including interviews and discussion groups to explore attitudes towards and experience of different types of respite services and the factors that influence the non-use of the various respite services available.
3. A survey to measure the relationship between different predisposing, enabling and need factors influencing the use of different respite products (i.e. day care, in-home services and residential respite) services.

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