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### Don't Miss These Patients! The Experience of Working Full Time While Also Being a Caregiver

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## ***Don't Miss These Patients! The Experience of Working Full Time While Also Being a Caregiver.***

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### **INTRODUCTION**

The project sought to understand the experiences of working professionals who are also the caregiver for others with a health care issue. A caregiver in this research study is an individual who provides personal, financial, social, physical, and or psychological support from individuals other than themselves.

### **BACKGROUND**

We believed that a significant number of professionals serve as a caregiver for individuals such as, but not limited to, a parent, partner, significant other, spouse or child. Caregivers serve as an extension of the health care system (Caregiver Action Network, n.d.; Swartz & Collins, 2019). The literature reflects individuals who have stepped into the role of caregiving with little to no preparation. They are often ill-prepared to deal with the challenges as they add this role to their already busy lives as professionals (Hilbrecht, et al., 2017).

### **PURPOSE**

These challenges will continue to increase, as one in five adults, by 2030 will require assistance with activities of daily living (Swartz & Collins, 2019).

### **METHOD**

The research design utilized was narrative inquiry; this approach provided us the opportunity to study the experiences as expressed in lived and told stories of individuals. The overarching question was: **“Would you please describe to me in detail the experiences you had with [your parent, your family member, your friend, your client, your patient- as appropriate] as a working professional who is also a caregiver? “**

## **The overarching theme is: Life Disrupting**

***“like on any given day you're in a tornado and you're in the tornado that just sucks you up, and there's nothing you can do but react to the situation that is at hand”***

### **It's Not Fair!**

***“You can quite often feel like you're the only one, it's like, how can I do this. I'm here stuck doing this and that and I don't have time and it becomes a lot of I don't have anyone that understands. Family and close friends do not understand because they are not in the same situation”***

### **Doing the Right Thing or Doing What You Have to Do**

***“I think my situation is a little different today, because I have a lot of resentment because my father left us when I was very young, too. So, it was a little bit of (I don't want to sound ugly), but it was a little bit of: How's it feel? How's it feel, now that you feel that you need somebody, there's nobody, there's nobody there for you? But then you go, oh my God, how can I say that? That's my daddy I gotta run back to him, and go back to him, so there were a lot of like deep emotions for me because of my situation”***

### **Self –Care is Not an Option**

***“I asked (God) on many occasions to not let me die. Because if I do, there will be no one to take care of my mother. I just told you about my sister, I do not talk about that much. I did not go to doctors, period. I may suffer now. I had no health care, none, Zero. And now here is this virus (COVID-19) that makes it even more challenging”***

### **Objectives**

Upon completion of this presentation participants will be able to:

1. Describe experiences of working professionals who are also caregivers.
2. Identify potential conditions that require screening in the caregiver population.

### **IMPLICATIONS**

Nurse practitioners and other healthcare team members should inquire if their adult patients are caregivers. This provides them with an opportunity to educate on the family or friend's health condition, coping strategies, outlook, and potential care decisions. Knowing more about these situations will identify those who might otherwise be missed and need screenings for stress, anxiety, and depression. Caregivers might not know how to utilize their nurse practitioner or other members of the health care team to support them in their caregiving role.

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