

Family as a Source of Stress and Well-Being: Implications for Seniors

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Background

People usually prefer to have a family and want children to offer and receive emotional and material support when needed. Sometimes, family members disappoint their loved ones, altering their equilibrium.

Aim

To highlight the adverse effects of impolite verbal communication between parents and children over the phone on their well-being.

Material & Method

In 2024, the author conducted a qualitative study in the community to explore how interactions among people impact their health.

Findings

In October 2024, a patient, aged 76, received a home visit from one of her children, who was working abroad. She was pleased to see him in person with his family. She told them her decision to offer them her property [a house with the surrounding land]. A daughter of the patient who didn't prefer to work abroad considered her mother's choice as an offense and called her using inappropriate communication skills. After this call, the patient presented headache, chest pain, and dyspnoea at a minimum exercise level.

Patient's health history: hypertension from 1994; heart failure HYHA class III from 2023.

Patient's family health history: parents, brother, and sister: arterial hypertension.

Actions were taken

The patient checked her blood pressure; an increased blood pressure value was noticed: 180/110 mm Hg, and a heart rate of 110 beats/ min. She used the drugs as recommended by her cardiologist. After a week, regular home visits of the family physician revealed increased blood pressure: 170/97 mmHg, a heart rate of 92/min, dyspnoea at the regular physical activity, and a slight mood disorder.

Interviewing the patient about her daily routine, the family physician noticed that the patient was experiencing emotional distress, particularly after a phone conversation with her daughter. To help the patient cope, the physician advised her to focus less on the distressing event, to avoid similar discussions in the future and to select supportive, dear persons for collaboration in person or virtual.

Results

The patient seems to embrace the family doctor's advice.

Conclusion

A family can be a source of well-being and stress, particularly for seniors.

Implications

Seniors can offer their properties according to their preferences; their children must respect their decisions, even if they are sometimes wrong, so as not to harm their inner lives or disturb their equilibrium, including heart and vessel function. Informative programs are required.

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