

The Impact of a Certified Nurse Accompanying the Home-Visit Nurse on Patient Outcomes in an Aging Society: A Japanese Case Study

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Background

Japan is experiencing an aging population, prompting a transition from hospital-based treatment and recuperation to community and home environments. To ensure high-quality treatment and care in home settings, there is a growing need for nurses with advanced expertise. In response, our hospital has introduced a program (termed “a companion home-visit nursing”) where Certified Nurses (CNs) from the hospital engage in community home-visit nursing services.

Objective

The objective was to clarify the impact of a companion home-visit nursing on care recipients.

Methods

The study period was from August 2024 to March 2025. Six semi-structured interviews were carried out with patients who received a companion home-visit nursing, and the data were qualitatively and descriptively analyzed using the KJ method. This study was conducted with approval from the institutional ethics review board (2024-0010).

Results

The care recipients had an average age of 81.6 years, with one male and five females; four lived alone, and two lived with family. They included four patients with stoma-related issues and two with chronic heart failure requiring self-care, all of whom had been treated at our hospital and discharged (Figure 1,2).

Interviews revealed that patients chose a companion home-visit nursing due to trust in CNs. The relationships built during hospitalization and the sense of security from CNs' care were influential. Additionally, the quality of care from home-visit nurses alone varied by individual, but CN involvement enabled highly specialized care at home same as it was in the hospital, contributing to better coordination between hospitals and communities. No negative opinions were expressed regarding the financial burden.

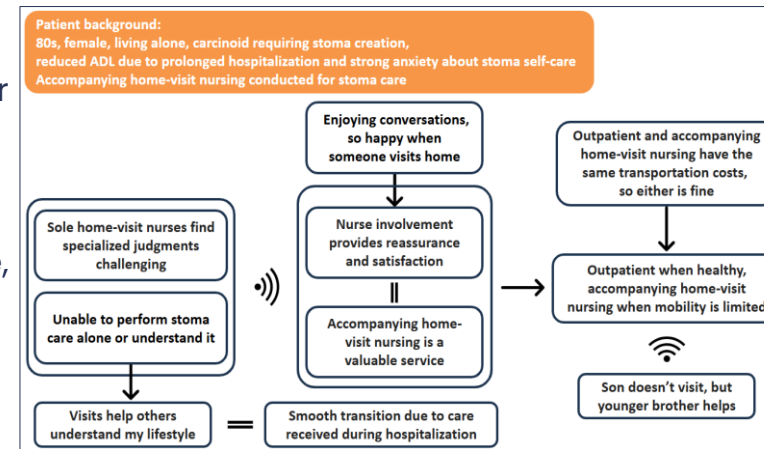


Figure1. Example of analysis: a case with a Stoma patient

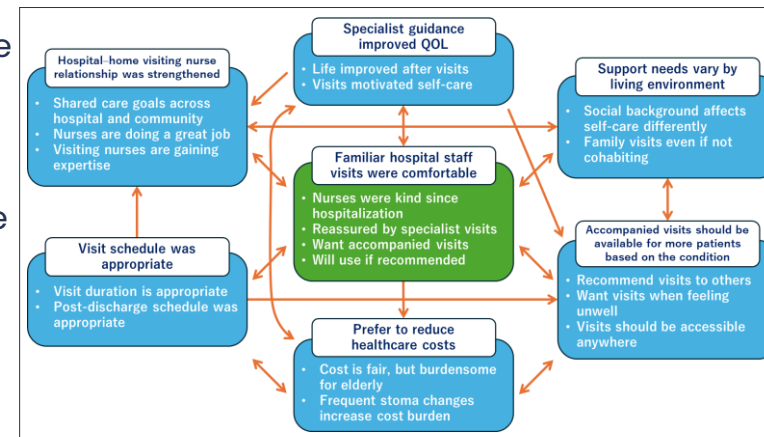


Figure 2. Patients' Perceptions of CN's Home-Visit Nursing

Discussion

The Patients felt a strong sense of reassurance knowing that hospital nurses continued to provide care after discharge. As the study focused on patients discharged from our hospital, the introduction of a companion home-visit nursing alleviated anxieties about transitioning from hospital to home by enabling hospital-level care to continue at home, fostering reassurance. In Japan, CNs mainly work in hospitals, and those active in community settings remain scarce. Moving forward, accumulating experience with a companion home-visit nursing, promoting its expansion by CNs from various specialties in hospitals, and advocating for societal support systems are essential to ensure more patients can access highly specialized care even at home.