

Caregiver Adaptations to Reduce Environmental Stress



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Caregiving and the Home Environment



- Space and features in the home are essential for family caregiving.
(Newman et al., 1990; Pynoos & Sanford, 2001)
- Caregiver interventions are undersubscribed and needs are not clearly recognized.
(Liebig, 1993; Montgomery & Kosloski, 2000)
- Collaboration of Aging Networks and Independent Living Centers are needed to strengthen HM service delivery.
(Liebig, 2002)

Caregiver Adaptations to Reduce Environmental Stress (CARES)



- Purpose of CARES is to:
create and stimulate improved systems of supportive services that increase caregiver utilization of **environmental coping strategies** to reduce physical burden and strain

Environmental Coping Strategies



- Environmental Coping Strategies include:
 - Home Modification (HM):
 - minor and major adaptations to homes that can make it safer and easier to carry out daily activities
 - Assistive Devices (AD)



Objectives of CARES



1. Assess caregivers
2. Educate service providers on ECS
3. Stimulate aging network activities
4. Evaluate and disseminate strategies



Assessing Caregiver Needs



- Four Groups of Caregivers (CGs)
- Convenience Sample, N= 27
- Southern California
- 2/3 female
- 66.7% currently married
- Mostly Caring for Older Adults



Focus Group Questions



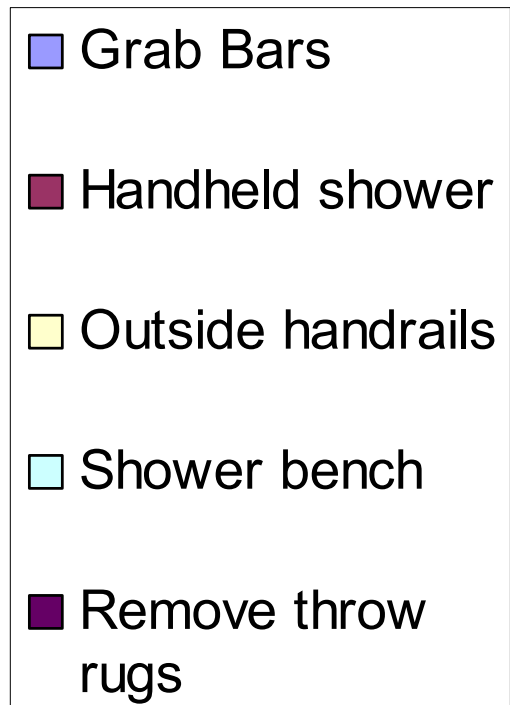
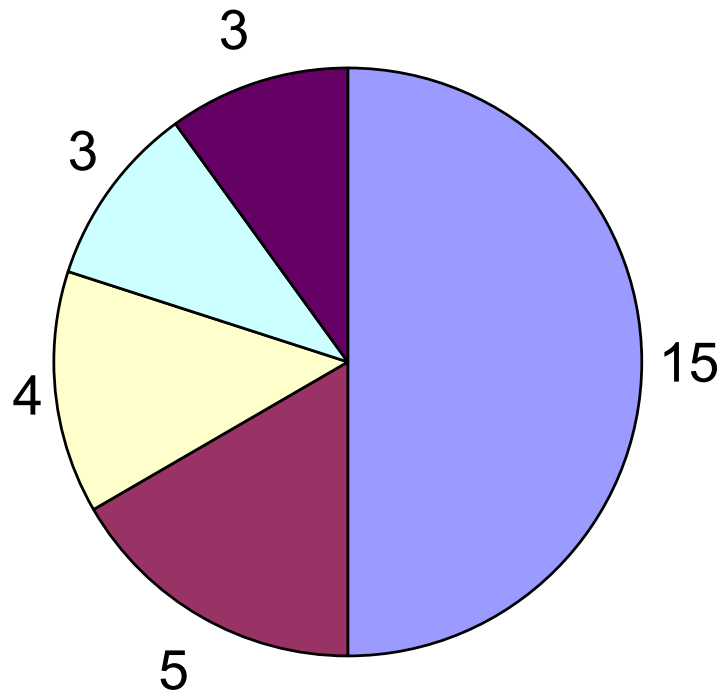
- What are the most burdensome activities for caregivers (CGs)?
- What HMs & ADs are currently used by CGs?
- Where do CGs go for help?

Caregivers need Strategies for these Burdensome Activities



- Bathing
- What's available
- Feeding
- Dressing
- Mobility
- Incontinence
- Planning, costs, installation

Home Modifications Utilized N=27





Considered HM's



- 50% considered making changes, not yet made
 - Grab bars
 - Toilet seat
 - Ramp
 - Shower seat



Getting the Work Done



- “Just did it”
- Friend
- Agency or service person
- Support group, neighbor, or family

Ways Caregivers Prefer to Get Information



- Talking to Someone, 79%
- Catalog, 41%
- TV, 35%
- Internet, 21%
- Video, 3%

Places CGs Go for Information on HM & AD



- Support Group
- Caregiver Resource Center
- Medicare handbooks
- Senior Care Network & Aging Services



Barriers to HM



- Cost
- Will it work for us?
- Finding someone to do the work
- Time to find out what's available

Lessons from Caregivers



- Most physically demanding
 - Lifting, transferring, and bathing

- Most frequent HM
 - Grab bars

- Most problematic room
 - Bathroom

Lessons from Caregivers

(cont.)



- Concerns of community mobility
 - Getting out
 - Transportation

- Limited use of HM & AD
 - Cost prohibitive
 - Benefits not understood

Lessons from Caregivers (cont)



- Perception of financial assistance
 - Funding only for institutional care
 - Deplete own finances at home

- Where to go?
 - Sharing at Support Groups
 - Hardware Stores, Retail stores



Funding for HM & AD



- Funding
 - the greatest informational need
 - #1 challenge to caregiver services

- Piece together funding
 - Area Agencies on Aging
 - Independent Living Centers
 - Rebuilding Together

Conclusions



- Caregivers want to know more about how the home environment can assist with demanding caregiving tasks
- Caregivers want know what resources are available and where to go for HM information and services
- Caregivers have difficulty knowing where to go to get the work done
- Caregivers need assistance in paying for costly modifications
- Caregivers depend on family, friends, and people in their community for information



Contact Information



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National Resource Center on Supportive Housing and
Home Modification

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