

EFFICACY OF TASK-SPECIFIC TRAINING ON CAREGIVER SKILLS AND CONFIDENCE LEVELS

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Abstract (Limited to 300 Words):

Background and Purpose. Physical therapists have a responsibility to educate not only the patient but also family and caregivers as they are extensions of the health care team at home. Caregivers are responsible for patient safety if and when incidents arise. Currently, efficacy of task-specific training for caregivers has not been reported. The purpose of this study was to examine the efficacy of task-specific training for informal caregivers focusing on transitions from the floor to a seated position and from a seated position to standing.

Subjects. Fifteen informal caregivers (4 male, 11 female) were recruited from the community.

Methods and Materials. The study was approved by the Institutional Review Board at Mayo Clinic, Rochester, MN as a quasi-experimental 1-group pretest-posttest study. Caregiver skill and confidence levels were measured pre- and post-training with the Caregiver Transition Skills Test and the Adapted Falls Efficacy Scale-International, respectively. The caregiver training used a simulation method.

Analyses. SPSS statistical software version 15.0 was used to analyze pre- and post-test scores on the CTST and Adapted FES-I with paired t-tests ($\alpha = 0.05$).

Results. An average change of 7 points ($p < 0.001$) and 9 points ($p = 0.028$) was found for the Caregiver Transition Skills Test and Adapted Falls Efficacy Scale-International respectively.

Conclusion. Results from the pilot study suggest that task-specific training for caregivers is effective to increase skill and confidence levels.

Implications. Physical therapists may consider implementing caregiver training sessions into their plan of care to improve skill and confidence levels.