

Determinants of informal caregivers' well-being and moderators that alleviate negative well-being consequences of informal caregiving

Findings from The Older Persons and Informal Caregivers Survey Minimum DataSet (TOPICS-MDS)

Ellen Verbakel^{a)}, Silke F. Metzelthin^{b)} & Gertrudis I.J.M. Kempen^{b)}

^{a)} Department of Sociology, Radboud University Nijmegen, The Netherlands

^{b)} Department of Health Services Research, and CAPHRI School for Public Health and Primary Care, Maastricht University, The Netherlands

Prepared for the ISOL meeting of February 10, 2015

First draft, please do not cite or quote

We consider Journal of Gerontology: Social Sciences as a possible outlet for this work

Abstract

Informal caregiving has been shown to be detrimental to caregivers' well-being. This study investigates explanations for caregivers' well-being in the Netherlands and the degree to which formal and informal support can alleviate the negative consequences of informal caregiving. Theoretically, it builds on the stress/appraisal model introduced by Yates et al. (1999). However, it proposes adjustments that more fully incorporate the idea of a moderating impact of support to caregivers. It is predicted that caregiver's well-being is the final outcome of a stress process that results from three elements: primary stressors (i.e., the health situation of the care receiver), primary appraisal (the number of hours of caregiving) and secondary appraisal (caregiver's burden). Each relationship in this model could in principle be alleviated by three types of support: professional home care, support from other informal caregivers or volunteers, and support from family and friends. Empirical results on dyads of 2,992 informal caregivers and their older care receivers showed that well-being is indeed dependent on the care receivers' health conditions, hours of informal caregiving, and caregiver's burden. In addition, especially professional home care was shown to alleviate the negative impact of primary stressors on caregiver's well-being.