

2022 Best Research Poster Award

The experience of compound carers in the western suburbs of Melbourne

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INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study was to explore the lived experience of compound carers. Australia's population is ageing, and informal carers play a significant role in alleviating the pressure on the healthcare system. Compound carers are informal carers with multiple care responsibilities.

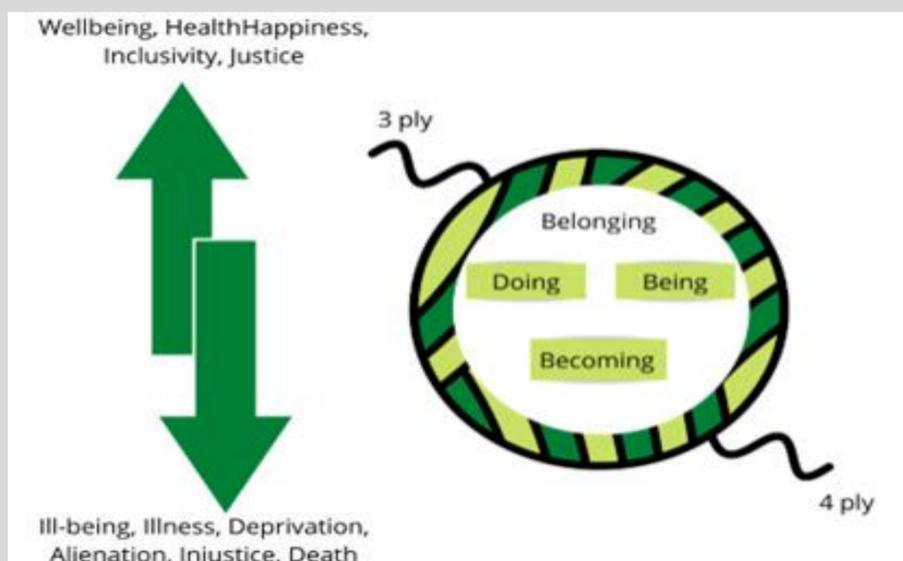
OBJECTIVES

- To explore the lived experience of compound carers residing in the Western Suburbs of Melbourne
- To explore the lived experience of caring for an older person plus an additional person
- To capture a sample from diverse backgrounds

METHOD

- Qualitative design
- 5 semi-structured interviews with compound carers
- Phenomenology and reflexive thematic analysis were used to analyse the data and identify themes
- Themes and subthemes were contextualised using the Pan Occupational Paradigm

The Pan Occupational Paradigm



Adapted from "The pan occupational paradigm: development and key concepts", by D. Hitch, G., Pepin and K. Stagnitti, 2018, *Scandinavian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 25(1), 27-34, p.32.

RESULTS

Themes included:

- Doing compound care
- Being a compound carer
- Belonging as a compound carer
- Becoming a compound carer

"... unfortunately for carers, in the world there is not a lot of help available, unless you know exactly how to get it"

"... definitely an environment I really would rather not continue to be in or want for anyone else"

"You just do it. You suck it up and you get on with it and if you need to fall apart, you do that later"

"... I just think that caring for two people, we can't do either of them properly"

DISCUSSION

- Systemic barriers to accessing formal supports occur in both the aged care and disability service systems
- Carers experience significant administrative burden and often must navigate My Aged Care and the National Disability Insurance Scheme simultaneously
- Compound carers with adequate support (informal or formal) can engage in occupations outside of their carer role which leads to a more positive caregiving experience
- Compound carers experiencing family conflict and an inability to engage in friendships are deprived of informal support as a way of coping

CONCLUSION

The study was the first to explore the lived experience of compound carers in Australia.

It has provided insights into compound caregiving and the factors that influence a positive or negative experience.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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