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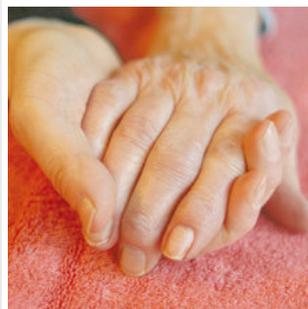
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Family Members Bear Main Burden of Care for Dementia Patients Living at Home

Neuherberg, August 23, 2011. Care by family members covers eighty percent of the societal costs of caring for dementia patients living in a community setting, according to a joint study conducted by Helmholtz Zentrum München and University Hospital Erlangen. The economic study has now been published in the journal *Value in Health* as one of the results of the IDA Project*.



Credit: Initiative Demenzversorgung in der Allgemeinmedizin (IDA)

The Institute of Health Economics and Health Care Management (IGM) of Helmholtz Zentrum München and University Hospital Erlangen (Clinic of Psychiatry and Psychotherapy) have conducted a joint study to improve the care situation of community-living dementia patients and their family caregivers. In the study, the costs for the care of dementia patients were identified. The financial value of the care provided by family caregivers was calculated on the basis of the current average rates per hour for professional caregivers. According to calculations by the health economist Larissa Schwarzkopf, the equivalent financial value of the caregiver hours provided by family members covers approximately 80% of the total care costs. For patients in a moderate disease stage these amount to almost twice the care costs for patients in a mild disease stage.

"In the future due to demographic change and the declining size of families, most dementia patients can no longer be cared for by family members at home but instead are dependent on professional assistance," said Prof. Dr. Rolf Holle, leader of the research group Economic Evaluation at the IGM. "This development poses a major challenge for our social security system. New caregiving services must be developed and financed to continue to ensure caregiving for dementia patients in the community setting."

About 1.2 million people in Germany over age 65 currently suffer from dementia, a number equivalent to 7% of this age group. The risk of dementia rises in correlation with increasing age. As a consequence of demographic trends, the number of dementia patients in Germany is expected to double by 2050.

Further information

Original publication: Schwarzkopf, L. et al., Costs of Care for Dementia Patients in Community Setting: An Analysis for Mild and Moderate Disease Stage, *Value in Health* (2011); doi:10.1016/j.jval.2011.04.005

[Link to journal publication](#)

As German Research Center for Environmental Health, Helmholtz Zentrum München pursues the goal of developing personalized medical approaches for the prevention and therapy of major common diseases such as diabetes mellitus and lung diseases. To achieve this, it investigates the interaction of genetics, environmental factors and lifestyle. The Helmholtz Zentrum München has about 1,900 staff members and is headquartered in Neuherberg in the north of Munich on a 50-hectare research campus. Helmholtz Zentrum München is a member of the Helmholtz Association, a community of 17 scientific-technical and medical-biological research centers with a total of about 31,000 staff members. www.helmholtz-muenchen.de

IDA Project: The Initiative for Dementia Care in General Practice (IDA) was founded by the Federal Association of the AOK, AOK Bavaria, Pfizer and Eisai to provide a better quality of life for patients with dementia living in a community setting as well as to support their family caregivers. Helmholtz Zentrum München and University Hospital Erlangen provide scientific services and advice in support of the project. IDA is one of the largest intervention studies on outpatient care for dementia patients. www.projekt-ida.de

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