

Satisfaction of Elderly Individuals with Care Services and the Burden of Caregivers, in the northern part of Cyprus

Survey Research Report

Prepared by:

Association of Elderly Rights & Mental Health

September 2022



This publication was funded by the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of Association of Elderly Rights and Mental Health and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. <i>Introduction</i>	3
2. <i>Satisfaction of Care Service of Elderly Living in Nursing Homes</i>	5
2.1 Demographics of Elderly Living in Nursing Homes	5
2.2 Health Condition of Elderly Living in Nursing Homes	6
2.3 Data on the Service Received by the Elderly in Nursing Homes.....	7
3. <i>Care Burden of Caregivers Working in Nursing Homes</i>	9
3.1 Demographics of Caregivers in Nursing Homes	9
3.2 Examination of the Services Provided by Caregivers in Nursing Homes ...	10
3.3 Examination of the Care Burden of Caregivers Working in Nursing Homes	12
4. <i>Satisfaction of Elderly Receiving Home Care</i>	14
4.1 Demographics of Elderly Cared for at Home.....	14
4.2 Health Condition of Elderly Living at Home.....	15
4.3 Satisfaction of Home Care of Elderly	17
5. <i>Care Burden of Home Caregivers</i>	17
5.1 Demographics of Home Caregivers	17
5.2 Examination of Services Provided by Home Carers	18
5.3 Care Burden of Home Caregivers.....	19
6. <i>Care Burden of Family Caregivers</i>	19
6.1 Demographics of Family Caregivers	19
6.2 Examining the Care Provided by Family Members	19
6.3 Care Burden of Family Members	21
7. <i>Conclusion</i>	21

1. Introduction

According to 2022 data of the United Nations, the population of almost all countries is increasing, and the share of elderly people in country populations is on the increase (United Nations, 2022)¹. In parallel to this global demographic change, both the population and the elderly population had increased in the northern part of Cyprus in the last 20 years. According to the 1996 and 2006 censuses, the population of people aged over 60 years old in the northern part of Cyprus was at 10%, and this increased to 12% according to the 2011 census. According to projections by the local organisation in charge for planning, it is estimated that this figure rose to 13% in 2016 (LPO 2017).

Research conducted by the Association of Elderly Rights and Mental Health in March 2019 and August 2020 showed that nursing homes in the northern part of Cyprus are unable to meet elderly care needs.² In the northern part of Cyprus there is a population of approximately 300,000, and a total of 6 nursing homes, 4 of which are private and 2 are public, and these nursing homes can currently only care for 170 people at full capacity. The number of nursing homes has not increased in the last 10 years, and the number of nursing homes, which totalled 8 in 2019, decreased to 6 with the closure of 2 private nursing homes in 2022. Therefore, the institutional care capacity in the northern part of Cyprus, which should have increased in proportion to the increasing number of elderly people, decreased and created great problems in the society. Considering the increasing elderly population, if urgent measures are not taken in this area, it is inevitable that families will face much bigger problems in the coming years.

According to the research conducted by the Association of Elderly Rights and Mental Health in 2019 and 2020, it was observed that low-income elderly people in need of care are generally cared for in nursing homes, while middle- and high-income elderly people are cared for at home. The reason for this is that institutional care, that is,

¹ <https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/ageing>

² Association of Elderly Rights & Mental Health (March, 2019), Status Report of Senior Citizens Residence and Elderly Nursing Homes in the northern part of Cyprus
Association of Elderly Rights & Mental Health (August, 2020) Preferences and Problems with Elderly Care of Families in the northern part of Cyprus

nursing homes and care homes, is not sufficient in quantity and the elderly care services they provide are not satisfactory. For these reasons, families prefer home care for their elderly through their own financial means, in order to provide better care. However, it is apparent that home care is not as trouble-free as it was thought, and it also brings other problems to families. According to the August 2020 report of the Association of Elderly Rights and Mental Health, 96% of home caregivers have had no training in geriatric care. Out of these home carers, 65% did not to receive training or develop themselves in the field of elderly care. It was determined that family members undertake the care of some elderly people and these families face many difficulties. Elderly care services are open to abuse due to the absence of legal text determining the standards of care services provided both in nursing homes and at home, and it has been revealed that this situation leaves elderly people exposed to be neglect and abuse.

This report aims to measure the service satisfaction of the elderly living at home and in nursing homes, and the care burden of caregivers/families, based on research conducted by the Association of Elderly Rights and Mental Health in April 2021, as part of the “Elderly Rights Movement Project” funded by the European Union. Based on data from a total of 5 surveys, the report measures how satisfied the elderly are with the care they receive at home and in nursing homes, and tries to reveal the problems related to care services in the elderly care sector by measuring the care burden of caregivers.

There has been no such research previously conducted in the northern part of Cyprus. Therefore, this first of its kind research has formed a foundation for future studies. Following the completion of the Elderly Rights Movement Project, the development of the elderly care sector will be able to be determined through similar survey research in years to come. Additionally, the information obtained from this research will be useful for local institutions to develop their aged care policies.

In this study, five different questionnaires were prepared according to the target group and were completed at both nursing homes and members of the public. The breakdown of the participants is shown below:

1. Elderly participants residing in a care homes:	45
2. Geriatric carer participants working at care homes:	26
3. Elderly participants living in their homes:	44
4. Home geriatric carer participants:	28
5. Family care giver participants looking after their elderly at home:	15

2. Satisfaction of Care Service of Elderly Living in Nursing Homes

To measure the level of satisfaction of care service of the elderly living in nursing homes, the questionnaire was completed by a total of 45 elderly people from 4 private and 2 public nursing homes. The results are outlined below. The completion of the questionnaires was implemented face-to-face by volunteer Association members who visited the nursing homes.

2.1 Demographics of Elderly Living in Nursing Homes

The questionnaires were answered by 47 elderly people who volunteered to participate in the survey and were able to express themselves. The average age of 47 elderly people participating in this survey is 72, and 64% of the elderly are female and 36% are male. When we look at the education level, it is seen that the majority of the elderly completed their academic life at primary school (30%) or were literate (19%) and a large percentage of them are illiterate (23%).

Considering their marital status, it is seen that 49% of the elderly people are widows/widowers, 14% of them had a spouse, and 21% of them had never married. In addition, it was observed that 66% of the elderly had children and 34% did not have children. When asked about whether they have relatives who visit them regularly, 72% of them stated they have visitors, while 28% stated that they do not have anyone who visits them regularly.

When asked whether or not they had a regular income, that is, whether they had a salary, 89% said they had a salary, while 11% said they did not have a salary. Out of

those receiving a salary it was found that 37% received disability and social benefit payments from local institutions, while others received payments from their social insurance (24%) or received a salary due to their spouse (17%). When asked whether their monthly income is enough to pay for the nursing home, 38% of the elderly stated that their salary is not enough to pay for the nursing home. They said the remaining amount for the nursing home fees were covered by their families, while the two elderly people were cared for free of charge by the nursing home.

2.2 Health Condition of Elderly Living in Nursing Homes

According to the results of the questionnaire applied to 47 elderly people living in nursing homes, it was determined that 62% of these elderly people have a chronic disease. In addition to this, 59% of them also have a mental illness. It is observed that 38% of the elderly have a blood pressure condition, 34% have diabetes and 14% have heart disease (Table 1). In general, 91% of the elderly living in nursing homes regularly use medication due to their chronic diseases.

In terms of their physical condition, 66% are able to walk unassisted and 83% are able to speak without impairment. However, a large proportion of these elderly people stated that they needed support to meet their basic needs such as bathing, going to the toilet and getting dressed. According to the answers, 83% cannot bath, 64% cannot use their medication, 50% cannot get dressed and 39% cannot use the toilet unassisted. It was determined that nurses were employed at all of the nursing homes, but were not present in every shift.

Table 1. Health condition of elderly living in nursing homes

Illness	Percentage (%)	Illness	Percentage (%)	Illness	Percentage (%)
Blood Pressure	38%	Hernia	3 %	Cholesterol	3 %
Diabetes	34 %	Cancer	7 %	Mental Illness	59 %
Heart disease	14 %	Hypothyroidism	3 %	Stomach	3 %
Stroke	10 %	COPD	34 %	Visual impairments	7 %

2.3 Data on the Service Received by the Elderly in Nursing Homes

When the 47 participants were asked about whose decision it was for them to live in a nursing home, only 17% said it was their own decision, while 37% said their children decided, and 35% other relatives. Despite this, 72% stated that they came to the nursing home voluntarily, not by force, and 15% could not give a definite answer to this question.

When asked the question, “Does a nurse come to you when you need help?”, 94% answered “yes”. In response to the question “Are you able to see a doctor when you need?”, 72% said “yes”. When asked about the administration of medicine, it was stated that 96% of the elderly were given their medication without disruption. In response to our question about the carers, 95% of the elderly stated that the carers come to their side immediately when needed.

It was stated that carers supported the elderly mostly in bathing and least in feeding them. When the elderly felt bad and down, 70% stated that they shared the issue with their careers, and 82% said the carers listened to them and gave them morale. Some 80% said the carers treated them with understanding and patience.

When asked whether they felt safe in the nursing home, the majority of the elderly (79%) stated that they felt safe, 15% said they felt safe “sometimes”, and 6% said they did not feel safe. The participants’ reasons for not feeling safe are explained in Table 2.

Table 2. Participants' reasons for not feeling safe

Discrimination
Illness
I don't know
I cannot easily reach my children
I do not see my children; they do not visit
I shy away from the other elders
I do not have money; I do not have social insurance

In order to understand whether the elderly living in nursing homes is exposed to violence, when we asked, "Is there anyone in the nursing home who raises their hand against you?", 98% of the elderly stated that they were not subjected to physical or verbal violence. Only one elderly person in a nursing home belonging to a public institution stated that someone raised their hand and them, but they avoided giving a name. When asked, "Do you hesitate to tell someone or make a complaint when there is something you don't like about the nursing home?", 87% of the elderly answered "no".

Some 72% of the elderly stated that they got along well with their other fellow elderly residents, and 83% said they got along with the carer working at the nursing home. When a question was asked about the deficiencies of the nursing home, the participants complained about various issues, especially about meals. The deficiencies of the nursing homes expressed by the participants are outlined in Table 3.

Table 3. Deficiencies of the nursing homes expressed by the elderly participants

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There are no snacks.• I need more attention.• There are no social activities.• The portion of bread served is too little. I was hungry at 8am but the kitchen closed; I cannot get what I need when I need it.• I wanted to go outside for a few hours a day. I am mentally and physically healthy, the people here are not able to communicate much.

- I suffer problems due to my health problems. There is no doctor or nurse support.
- I have diabetes but there is no snack between meals. My daughter brings them, sometimes they finish and I cannot eat anything.
- I want a television.
- I feel lonely. I need support.
- The meals are bad.

3. Care Burden of Caregivers Working in Nursing Homes

According to the 2019 Status Report of Senior Citizens Residence and Elderly Nursing Homes in the northern part of Cyprus by the Association of Elderly Rights and Mental Health, nursing homes located in the northern part of Cyprus lack the quantity and quality of employed caregivers and nurses, due to their low income. In other words, nursing homes employ fewer caregivers and nurses than needed. Also, it has been observed that private nursing homes work on a basis of 2 shifts – instead of 3 – in 24 hours, due to the absence of a legal text on nursing home. This situation causes those working in nursing homes to work longer than 8 hours and undertake more than one duty. Since we foresee that this situation may cause unhappiness, fatigue and burnout in employees, we measured and analyzed the care burden of caregivers and nurses with this survey study.

3.1 Demographics of Caregivers in Nursing Homes

All nursing homes serving in the northern part of Cyprus were included in the study, and a total of 26 elderly care staff and nurses who volunteered to participate in the survey answered the questions. It was seen that the youngest participant in the survey was 28, the oldest was 58, and the average age was 40. When examined in terms of gender, 25 of the 26 participants, 96%, were women.

When the nationalities of the caregivers are examined, 77% of them are from the northern part of Cyprus, 15% are from Turkey, and 8% are from Turkmenistan. It has been observed that the foreign national caregivers have lived in the northern part of

Cyprus for at least 5 years and two of them have work permits. Looking at the education levels, 38% of the caregivers are primary and secondary school graduates, 27% are high school graduates, and 35% are university graduates. When their marital status is examined, 60% are married and 40% are divorced or never married. It has been observed that caregivers have an average of 6.7 years of work experience in nursing homes for the elderly.

3.2 Examination of the Services Provided by Caregivers in Nursing Homes

The caregivers who participated in the survey stated that they work an average of 13 hours a day, at least 8 hours a day. When asked about the amount of salary they receive, 88% of the caregivers stated that their salary is as much as the minimum wage, and only 3% of them receive above the minimum wage.

When asked, "Have you received any training on elderly care before?", it was seen that 69% of the caregivers received training in this field, but 31% did not receive any training on elderly care. When asked "Would you like to participate if there is training on elderly care?", it was observed that 69% of the caregivers were willing to receive training on elderly care. It is an important finding that these caregivers, most of whom have a low level of education, value education and want to develop themselves.

Although it is seen that 70% of the caregivers working in nursing homes regularly take their annual leave, 30% did not take their annual leave. However, it has been determined that 96% of the caregivers participating in the survey are satisfied with their work. When we asked, "Do you find the care you provide adequate?", 92% of them stated that they provided adequate care.

When we asked the care staff and nurses, "Do you think the number of caregivers in the nursing home you work in is sufficient?", a large majority (65%) stated that the number of caregivers in the nursing home they work in was insufficient, however, 54% of the caregivers stated that they did not experience burnout. In addition, 46% of the caregivers, that is, almost half of the respondents, stated that they do experience burnout from time to time.

When we asked, “What do you think is needed in order to better care for the elderly in the nursing home where you work?”, the caregivers expressed their needs on various issues. Since these needs are so diverse, we have grouped them so that they are understandable, as seen in Table 4. According to the answers given, it is apparent that the most important thing that caregivers need in order to provide better service to the elderly is not material resources, but moral support. 19 out of 20 caregivers (95%) who answered this question expressed their need for moral support in various words such as morale, motivation, love, respect, compassion, understanding and patience. This remarkable finding is thought to be an indication that behaviours such as ignoring the human needs of elderly caregivers, isolating, excluding or devaluing are very common in our society. Providing moral support to the elderly caregivers employed by nursing home owners can help caregivers feel valued and work more efficiently.

Apart from moral support, it is noteworthy that other resources needed by caregivers working in nursing homes are related to health (Table 4). 45% of the respondents expressed the need for doctors and nurses, while 35% expressed the need for medical supplies and patient turning/lifting equipment. Although the elderly living in nursing homes have physical (62%) or mental (59%) chronic diseases that require regular medication, they need to be under the supervision of a doctor on a regular basis, but most of the nursing homes do not have a full-time nurse. Caregivers participating in the survey expressed that this situation greatly increases their responsibilities and stress levels.

Table 4. Material and moral resources needed by nursing home carers to provide better care for the elderly

	No. of carers who responded to the question ¹	Percentage share in total answers
Moral support (love, respect, patience, compassion, moral motivation)	19	95%
Doctor and nurse	9	45%
Medical equipment and patient turning/lifting equipment	7	35%
Carers	3	15%
Other (beds, bedding, diapers)	2	10%

¹A total of 20 people answered this question.

3.3 Examination of the Care Burden of Caregivers Working in Nursing Homes

In this section we tried to understand what the caregivers think and feel while caring for the elderly, and tried to measure the level of their care burden. We conducted this study because we believe that if caregivers working in nursing homes are abused by nursing home owners, that is, if they work long hours or care for the elderly beyond their capacity, the burden of caregiving may become heavier and may affect the physical and mental health of caregivers. Caregivers working in unhealthy conditions may feel unhappy, hopeless and depressed. In such a case, it is thought that the communication of caregivers with the elderly may be adversely affected; their work may be disrupted, and they may neglect and abuse the elderly. Therefore, it is important to examine the care burden of caregivers. For this purpose, the questions in the “Caring Burden Scale” were used.³

The caregivers' responses to the Caregiving Burden Scale are summarized as percentages in Table 5. Although on the surface, the answers given suggest that the caregivers do not have any negative feelings and thoughts about the elderly they care for, that caring for the elderly does not wear them out spiritually and that they have complete control over their emotions, this data should be carefully reviewed. Considering the the information given in the previous section, it should be taken into account that many caregivers may not have responded to the questions in the Caregiving Burden Scale with their true feelings for fear of losing their jobs.

Table 5. Questions and findings reflecting the caregivers' burden according to the Caregiving Burden Scale

Scale sentences reflecting the feelings and thoughts of the caregivers	Never %	Rarely %	Sometimes %	Quite often %	Always%
The elderly seek more help than they need	35	15	38	8	4
I can't take enough time for myself	54	4	23	8	11

³ Inci F.H., & Erdem M. (2008). Adaptation of the Caregiver Burden Scale into Turkish, Validity and Reliability. *Journal of Ataturk University School of Nursing*, 11(4): 85-95.

I am unable to fulfil my family and work responsibilities	62	8	23	4	3
I am uncomfortable with the behaviour of the elderly	77	15	4	0	4
I feel angry when the elderly are with me	92	4	4	0	0
The elderly negatively affect my relationships with my family and friends	81	4	8	8	0
I'm afraid of what will happen to the elderly	28	20	24	16	12
I think the elderly people are dependent on me	8	8	27	15	42
I feel nervous when the elderly are with me	96	19	23	15	0
Taking care of the elderly deteriorates my health	81	12	7	0	0
I can't live my private life the way I want	69	19	23	15	8
Working in a nursing home affects my social life	73	8	8	8	4
I can't make friends easily because I care for the elderly	92	0	0	0	7
The elders see me as the only support and expect attention	12	8	23	19	39
There is enough money to care for the elderly	35	4	22	13	26
I will no longer be able to care for the elderly	88	0	8	0	4
I lose control of my life when the elderly get sick	73	12	7	4	4
I want someone else to take care of the elderly	96	0	4	0	0
I have to do more for the elderly	15	15	19	15	35
I do my best in caring for the elderly	0	0	0	27	73

4. Satisfaction of Elderly Receiving Home Care

4.1 Demographics of Elderly Cared for at Home

According to an August 2020 survey conducted by the Association of Elderly Rights & Mental Health, 75% of the elderly prefer to receive home care in their own homes instead of at an institution. In this 2022 survey, a care service satisfaction survey was conducted with 45 elderly volunteers living in Famagusta.

The youngest of the 45 participants was aged 72, the oldest was aged 97, and the average age was 87. It was determined that 78% of these elderly people were women and 22% were men, the majority (63%) were literate/primary school graduates, and 26% were illiterate. Some 82% of the elderly were widowed and lived alone, and 13% of them were still married and lived with their spouses, and receive care services. It was observed that all the elderly people who participated in the survey had children; the number of children varied between 1 and 10, but the majority (47%) had 3-4 children.

A total of 82% of elderly people receiving home care employed a full-time caregiver, while 18% employed a part-time caregiver, and were also cared for by their daughter or son. Almost all full-time caregivers were live-in carers, while the part-time caregivers served 5-6 hours a week. It was determined that the elderly employed a caregiver for an average of 5.5 years, and 88% stated that they found their caregiver through an acquaintance.

About 64% of the elderly who employ caregivers have changed carers 3-4 times on average. When the elderly were asked about their reasons for changing their caregivers, 53% stated they were not satisfied with their caregivers and changed their carer to find a better one. The elderly stated that 47% of the caregivers left the job voluntarily due to dissatisfaction. These data show us that families have to change caregivers frequently to care for their elders due to the dissatisfaction of both service recipients (elderly) and service providers (caregivers). This brings additional burden for families who care for their elderly at home, and for the elderly; it means that the process of getting to know/trust a new caregiver is repeated frequently.

When the elderly cared for their families at home are examined, it is seen that 88% of them were cared for by their daughters and 12% by their sons. Examining their financial situation, it is seen that 96% of the elderly have a monthly salary, but the majority of them have a very low income. Of these, 51% received salaries from social insurance and 31% from social services. Some 53% of the elderly stated that their income did not cover their monthly expenses and they were supported by their children.

4.2 Health Condition of Elderly Living at Home

It is determined that the elderly survey participants, among them Alzheimer's patients, cannot live alone and need care, due to both physical aging and chronic diseases. Some 40% of them could walk on their own, 31% were bedridden, and 29% could walk with assistance. In addition, 64% could speak and express themselves easily. It has been stated that the most needed care services for the elderly are basic needs such as bathing, taking their medications regularly, dressing and going to the toilet. 69% of the elderly cannot take a bath and take their own medicines alone, 62% cannot dress alone, and 53% cannot go to the toilet alone. It was stated that the type of care services needed the most are basic needs such as bathing, taking their medications regularly, getting dressed and going to the toilet. About 69% of the elderly said they cannot take a bath and take their own medicines alone, 62% cannot dress alone, and 53% cannot go to the toilet alone.

In the answers provided, it was determined that 91% of the elderly had a chronic disease and 36% had a mental illness in addition to this. The leading chronic diseases are blood pressure (43%), heart disease (24%), and diabetes (20%). In addition, it was stated that 10 out of 12 people who were stated to have mental and neurological illness had Alzheimer's disease. The percentages of the elderly living at home according to their diseases are outlined in Table 6.

Table 6. Health condition of elderly living at home

Illness	Percentage (%)	Illness	Percentage (%)
Blood pressure	43	Visual impairments	3
Mental and neurological illness	36	Atherosclerosis	3
Heart condition	24	Kidney	1
Diabetes	20	Asthma	1

97% of the elderly living at home use a drug constantly and 93% state that they are taken to the doctor when they are sick. When we asked whether a doctor was called to the house when necessary, 49% of them stated that it was called. Approximately 97% of the elderly living at home said they regularly use medication and 93% stated that they are taken to the doctor when they became ill. Additionally, all of the 45 elderly people included in the survey stated that their medications were given without interruption and their caregivers came immediately when called. A total of 57% of the bedridden elderly people were turned over at regular intervals. The areas where the elderly living at home receive help from their caregivers and their percentages are outlined in Table 7.

Table 7. In which of the following areas do your carers/relatives assist you?

Type of assistance	Percentage (%)
Getting dressed	82,4
Going to the toilet	73,5
Bathing	94,1
Washing hands/face	64,7
Brushing teeth	55,9
Eating	58,8
Using medications	88,2
Changing diapers	2,9

4.3 Satisfaction of Home Care of Elderly

All of the elderly survey participants stated that they were satisfied with receiving home care services. Some 69% of the elderly stated that when their morale was low, they were able to express this to their caregiver/family member that the caregiver/family member listened to them. Of the participants, 100% said their caregiver/family member is understanding towards them and 89% said their caregiver/family member is patient. Additionally, 93% have a good relationship with their families, 98% with their caregivers, and 98% feel safe. All the elderly who participated in the survey stated that their caregivers/family members did not inflict psychological or physical violence on them, and 88% of the elderly said they can talk with their families about issues they are not happy with.

When the elderly were asked what they needed for their care, they expressed their important needs, as outlined in Table 8. It was stated that these needs are usually financial or caused by lack of financial resources, while other needs include medicine, diapers, physical therapy, a wheelchair or a carer.

Table 8. Care needs expressed by elderly living at home

Diaper shortage	Financial support
Economic	Material items
Physiotherapy	Wheelchair
Shortage of medication	Full time carer

5. Care Burden of Home Caregivers

5.1 Demographics of Home Caregivers

A total of 28 home carers within the borders of Famagusta voluntarily participated in the survey. The average age of the 28 caregivers is 52, with the youngest at 29 and the oldest at 69, and all carers (100%) are women. It was determined that the caregivers were nationals of Turkmenistan, Turkey, Turkish Cypriot, Azerbaijani and

Vietnamese, 14% of whom were Turkish Cypriots and the remaining 86% were foreign nationals. It was determined that the majority of foreign national caregivers are citizens of Turkmenistan (67%).

Looking at the education level of caregivers, 50% of them are secondary and primary school graduates, 21% are high school graduates and 29% are university graduates. When asked "Have you received any training on elderly care before?", 96% answered "No, I did not". To the question "Would you like to participate in elderly care training?", 65% answered 'no', and 35% answered 'yes, I would like to participate'. The caregivers had an average of 7 years of caregiving experience and 79% of them worked for minimum wage.

5.2 Examination of Services Provided by Home Carers

Almost all of the caregivers surveyed said they took care of 1 elderly person and 71% work as a live-in carer. 47% of the elderly people cared for by caregivers can walk on their own and 79% do not have a mental illness. It was determined that 54% of the caregivers were able to ask for help from their relatives and children when needed, and 80% of the people who helped were the children of the elderly.

Some 88% of the caregivers stated that they did not have any problems in taking the elderly to the doctor, and 92% of them stated that the doctor came to their home when requested. When we asked the caregivers, "Is there anyone you get help from while caring for the elderly?", it was determined that the majority of them had someone helping them, and it was usually the elderly person's children.

When the caregiver is on leave or not at home for other reasons, 70% of the elderly participants are cared by their own children, while 11% are cared by another caregiver. When we asked the caregivers, "Do you find the care you provide sufficient?", all of the caregivers (100%) stated that they found the care they provided adequate. Although the caregivers worked at home for an average of 20 hours per day, 79% of them stated that they did not feel exhausted. 74% of caregivers take their annual leave regularly and all (100%) are satisfied with their work.

5.3 Care Burden of Home Caregivers

Of the home caregivers, 93% said that working as a home caregiver does not negatively affect their relationships with family members or friends. 75% of caregivers think that the elderly are dependent on them and 64% think that the elderly see them as their only support.

Additionally, 71% of caregivers think that their private life is not adversely affected. When asked if they have enough money to care for the elderly, 71% of the caregivers said they have enough money for the elderly. 93% of them think that they are not indecisive about what should be done for the elderly and 85% think that they do their best in the care of the elderly. When asked, "How much difficulty do you have in caring for the elderly?", 68% of the caregivers stated that they did not have any difficulties in caring for the elderly, and 14% stated that they sometimes had difficulties.

6. Care Burden of Family Caregivers

6.1 Demographics of Family Caregivers

A total of 15 family members living in Famagusta and taking care of the elderly answered the questionnaires voluntarily. When asked about the degree of closeness to the elderly they care for, it was determined that 14 of the 15 people (93%) were the daughter and 1 of them was the son. The average age of the family members caring for their elderly is 60, while the elderly are aged between 80 and 93 years old, and the average age is 88. This information shows us that the elderly who are cared for by their families at home are somewhat aged, and their children who care for them are beyond middle age, and some of them are themselves elderly.

6.2 Examining the Care Provided by Family Members

Approximately 73% of the 15 elderly people receiving care were bedridden or able to walk with assistance. In addition, 13% reported a mental illness. 53% of the caregiver family members said they were able to get help to care for their elderly from other family members, such as siblings and spouses, when necessary. Regarding access

to health services, 80% of the respondents stated that the doctor usually came home when called.

Some 68% of family members who take care of their elderly said they could leave the elderly alone for a short time while running errands outside. In addition, when the caregiver family member was not at home, other relatives took care of the elderly. When we asked, “Are there any challenging situations when looking after your elder?”, 62% of the family members stated challenges. These challenges are described in Table 9. Most of the difficulties mentioned are things which are physically difficult to do alone, such as lifting or positioning the elderly, and bathing them, and they also stated problems such as changing diapers and staying awake at night due to the care needs of the elderly.

Table 9. Challenging tasks faced by family caregivers

Challenging task	Percentage (%)
Bathing	28,6
Changing diapers	28,6
No sleep	14,3
Changing of position in bed	14,3
Feeding, giving drinks	14,3

All of the family caregivers (100%) regarded the care they provide to the elderly sufficient. In addition, 73% of them stated that they did not feel exhausted because of the care service they provided. When asked why they did not receive caregiver support, 50% of the family members who did not receive caregiver help stated that they did not need it. The other reasons given for not getting care help, outlined in Table 10, include financial reasons, dissatisfaction with carers and lack of trust.

Table 10. Reasons why family members did not get care support

Reason	Percentage (%)
Not trusting carers	10
No need	50
Financial reasons	20
Dissatisfaction with previous carer	10
I am getting help when I need	10

6.3 Care Burden of Family Members

About 60% of the family caregiver participants said they could not spare enough time for themselves because of taking care of their elderly, and again 60% thought that they could not fulfil their family and business responsibilities. Moreover, 8% of the respondents stated that the elderly they care for are dependent on them, and 80% stated that the elderly see them as their only support and this is a big responsibility.

While 27% of the elderly families stated they had enough money to care for the elderly, 27% said they did not. Although 53% of them expressed difficulties in caring for the elderly, when we asked "Would you like someone else to take care of your elderly?" 20% of them said that they sometimes wanted it, whereas 67% of them said that they absolutely did not want it.

In addition, 80% of the family members thought they did the best they could for their elders, while 73% said they should do more.

7. Conclusion

This research was carried out to determine the service satisfaction of elderly individuals living at home and in nursing homes, and the care burden of caregivers, in the northern part of Cyprus. In this comprehensive study, a total of 5 different questionnaires were applied to both the elderly and their caregivers, at home and in nursing homes. In addition, a questionnaire was applied to relatives of the elderly, who take care of their elderly at home, and their care burden was also measured. In total, the questionnaires were answered 89 elderly people, 54 caregivers and 15 relatives

of the elderly. The results of the face-to-face survey studies for each audience are summarized below.

Satisfaction of care service of elderly living in nursing homes

According to the results of the research, almost all of the elderly people staying in nursing homes have a chronic physical and/or mental illness, and maintain their daily lives with the help of caregivers. Although the elderly living in nursing homes stated that they were generally satisfied with the nursing homes they stayed in, some of the elderly complained about the lack of social activities, the poor quality of meals, lack of family visits, and the lack of snacks. Additionally, it was determined that healthy elderly people staying in nursing homes are bored of being indoors all the time and want to wander outside for a few hours every day. In this study, it was determined that the care of both elderly with mental and physical disorders and healthy elderly people in the same environment poses a problem for the elderly. It has been observed that healthy elderly people are neglected and spend most of their time alone in nursing homes because caregivers have to dedicate more time for elderly people in need of care.

Care burden of caregivers working in nursing homes

Although 96% of the elderly caregivers working in nursing homes were satisfied with their job, 65% of them stated that the number of caregivers in the nursing home was insufficient, and 46% stated that they experienced burnout from time to time due to the workload. In addition, it is a noteworthy finding that 95% of caregivers working in nursing homes for the elderly stated their need for moral support in order to provide better service, such as morale, motivation, love, respect, compassion, understanding and patience. This result shows that caregiving for the elderly is morally challenging, that it wears out employees emotionally, and employees often feel helpless and exhausted, and the caregivers, just like the elderly, need moral support. It is thought that this finding should be carefully considered by nursing home owners and family caregivers.

Satisfaction of elderly receiving home care

It was observed that the average age of the elderly who receive home care services is 88, and all of them have children. The elderly need the help of their children in order

to receive home care services. For this reason, home care is a care service that can only be accessed by the elderly who have children. When a caregiver is employed, the administrative tasks – such as providing financial support to the receiving parents, hiring the caregiver, checking whether the caregiver fulfils their responsibilities, and dismissing them if necessary – are usually undertaken by the children of the elderly. In the questionnaire applied to the elderly who received home care services, it was determined that almost all of the elderly were satisfied with the care, morale and support they received from their caregivers and their families. It was stated that the most important need of the elderly regarding **their** home care was financial resources.

Burden of home caregivers

It was determined that all of the caregivers working at home were women, 86% were foreign nationals, and 96% did not receive training on elderly care. All caregivers who looked after the elderly at home were satisfied with their work and found the service that they provided adequate. Although they stated that they worked an average of 20 hours a day, 80% of the caregivers stated that they did not experience burnout and that they received support from relatives of the elderly when necessary.

Burden of family caregivers

In the survey applied to relatives who took care of their elderly parents, it was concluded that the family members are the daughters (93%). Another important finding is that the average age of the children who took care of their elderly parents is 60, that is, the children may have physical difficulties while taking care of their elderly. Additionally, 60% of the family members who answered the questionnaire stated that they could not spare enough time for themselves and could not fulfil their family and business responsibilities because they took care of their elderly. Another result is that 80% of the participants were seen by their elderly as their sole source of support, and this situation has exacerbated the responsibilities of the children.



This publication was funded by the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of Association of Elderly Rights and Mental Health and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.

