enhancing preparedness and satisfaction of stroke caregivers for discharge -- by integrating their information needs priority in education

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Introduction
Stroke is the leading cause of long-term disability in the world. In Hong Kong, it affects more than 20,000 people every year. Due to the sudden onset, the new caregiving role, the responsibility of the continuous care at discharge and the unmet needs, family caregivers usually have to face uncertainty, anxiety, depression, poor health, and poor quality of life during patient hospitalization, at and after discharge. Actually, caregivers' discharge needs have been found to predict hospital readmission and service usage after discharge. Hence, when their actual information needs are found through systematic study, adequate in-depth information that fits their needs can be prepared and provided efficiently to enhance their preparedness and satisfaction for implementing post-stroke care at home.

Objectives
This study was to review the most important information needs in priority by stroke caregivers. The result is for refining the education content to enhance their preparedness for discharge and to reinforce collaborative interactions between caregivers and care providers.

Methodology
Subjects were stroke family caregivers of the in- and out-patients in a rehabilitation unit, having attended one or two 3-hour education talks via voluntary enrolment. Talk I focuses on re-stroke prevention and community rehabilitation supportive services while talk II themes on post-discharge arrangement and home care. After the program, they were invited to complete a questionnaire by rating the importance level of 14 stroke subtopics using 10-points liker scale and one open-ended question based on their self-perception.
Result
Within the 6 months from 25 April to 27 September 2014, total caregiver attendance was 106, total number of relevant patient was 96, total stroke admission was 412. Hence, 16.75% stroke families have attended the program among all admitted stroke patients. The response rate of the questionnaire was 89.11% (90 questionnaires were received). The rate of caregivers living with patient and planning home care is 45.54%. The top five important topics are re-stroke prevention (mean sore: 9.17), cognitive care (9.02), post-discharge supportive service (8.96), first aid home care at stroke recurrence (8.90), and complication management (8.76). As current education mostly focuses on re-stroke prevention and community rehab services, these results remind care providers to prepare and provide more in-depth practical information and community supportive services on “cognitive care”, “complication management” and “home first aid care at stroke recurrence”.