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Scientific Abstract

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Returning To Work After Stroke And The Impact Of Caregiver Presence: A Pilot Survey Study

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Stroke is the third leading cause of disability worldwide. In Singapore, the median age of hospitalization due to stroke is decreasing, suggesting that more stroke survivors may seek re-employment. Caregiver support is considered a significant facilitator for return-to-work among stroke survivors. In this pilot study, we surveyed a group of stroke survivors in Singapore to explore the impact of caregiver presence on their re-employment status. We recruited 87 stroke survivors using our existing research database. All participants completed one telephone survey. In addition to demographic data, we collected information on pre- and post-stroke employment using an employment questionnaire. We performed multiple logistic regression analysis to estimate the association between caregiver presence and re-employment status. Sixty-three participants were gainfully employed prior to stroke onset. Of these, 75% (n=47) returned to work. Among participants who returned to work, 68% (n=32) reported not having a primary caregiver, compared to 13% (n=2) of participants who did not return to work. We found that participants with no caregivers were more likely to return to work (OR=20.0, CI=3.4 – 115.9) compared to those who reported having a caregiver. We discovered a higher proportion of stroke survivors returning to work compared to previous Singaporean reports. The absence of caregivers may indicate greater functional independence among our participants, enhancing successful re-employment post-stroke. More research is needed to better understand the nature and impact of caregiver presence on stroke survivors returning to work.