

# 2018 Transplant Nurses Association National Conference

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**'The Future is Now: Aspire, Achieve, Advance'**



## The Care for Carers Of Lung Transplant Patients

**Mrs Josephine Taylor<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>The Prince Charles Hospital (Qld Health), Chermside, Australia

### **Biography:**

Senior Social worker on The Queensland Lung Transplant Team with 25 years experience. It is the responsibility of the social worker to care for patients and carers.

### **Abstract:**

**Purpose:** A patient's carer whether a spouse, parent, child or sibling is instrumental in providing full-time support to the transplant patient; however, little is known about how carers feel during this time. The study aims were to explore the expectations and needs of carers during the lung transplant journey and the types of intervention required by social work to determine if increased interventions would be of benefit in optimising psychosocial well being.

**Methods:** Cross-sectional survey of all nominated carers over 18 years of lung transplant patients in a single centre. Carers were asked 16 questions related to : transplant assessment processes; information provided regarding the expectations of the carer role and their relationships to the patients pre-and post -transplant; support by the multidisciplinary team and or potential benefit from a carers' support group. Carers rated each question from to poor to excellent using the Likert scale. Demographics of the carers were collected. Results: 73/254(28.7%) questionnaires/survey were returned. 40(54.8%) were male and their relationship to the patient was: 30 (41.1%) husband, 22(30.1%) wife, 15 (20.5%) partner, 4 (5.5% relative and 2 (2.7%) friend. 62 respondents (85%) felt that they would benefit from a carer-specific support group. 53 (73%) indicated that post-transplant psychosocial assessment by the social worker would be beneficial to help address relationship issues. 53 (68%) carers reported wanting more written information on their role and the expectations prior and post transplant.

**Conclusion:** Our results suggest, unmet need for information and psychosocial support for carers. There appears a high risk of relationship stress around the time of transplant. As a result of this work, we have an overwhelmingly popular monthly carers support group. We now look forward to re-auditing this from neglected part of peri-transplant care with the overall objective of improving outcomes from the lung transplant patients and their carers.