

## CONFERENCE ABSTRACT

### An Exploration of Resilience among Family Carers of People with Dementia

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Áine Teahan<sup>1</sup>, Attracta Lafferty<sup>1</sup>, Gerard Fealy<sup>1</sup>, Eilish McAuliffe<sup>1</sup>, Amanda Phelan<sup>1</sup>,  
Liam O'Sullivan<sup>2</sup>, Diarmuid O'Shea<sup>3</sup>

1: University College Dublin, Ireland;

2: Care Alliance Ireland;

3: St. Vincent's University Hospital, Ireland

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**Background:** The majority of people with dementia living in the community receive care from family members or other informal carers. Each family carer experiences caregiving differently, all family carers have varying levels of personal resilience when acting in the caregiving role. Defined as a set of personal qualities, resources and factors which allow an individual to maintain normal or enhanced functioning during times of adversity (1), resilience contributes to the carer's well-being and can influence the quality of care provided to the person with dementia. The aim of this study was to investigate the concepts and interventions related to resilience in dementia caregivers and explore models of resilience applicable to dementia caregiving.

**Methods:** A systematic literature review was conducted to explore resilience, as it applies to and impacts on caregiving. Peer-reviewed articles and grey literature published from 2006-2016 were included in the systematic search criteria, and searched using a range of scholarly databases. Two independent reviewers pre-screened the search results and conducted formal assessments and quality appraisals of the retrieved articles.

**Results:** A total of 13,863 studies were identified from the initial search and, following screening, 89 studies were included in the systematic review exploration of resilience. Based on narrative synthesis of the literature, the study reports a model of resilience for dementia caregivers which focuses on social and cultural factors, aspects of the caregiver-care recipient relationship and the caregiver's psychological resources.

**Conclusions:** While many studies focus on the area of caregiving, very few examine resilience as an independent construct. The findings build a model of resilience, which can facilitate the design and development of interventions aimed at enhancing resilience in family carers of people with dementia. Strengthening the resilience of families to take care of their loved ones is highly relevant for an integrated approach to caring for people with dementia. This research will help health and social care professionals to enable family caregivers to continue to provide care and facilitate people with dementia to remain in their homes.<sup>7</sup>

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1. Windle G. What is resilience? A review and concept analysis. *Reviews in Clinical Gerontology*. 2011 May 1;21(02):152-69.

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