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Background

Colorectal cancer cases increasing
 → Greater dependence on **informal carers**

Caring impacts carer's:

- Physical health
- Well-being
- General quality of life

Attributed to perceived **Burden of Care**



What factors place colorectal cancer carers most at risk of experiencing burden?

Study objectives

- I. Patient **health**
 - II. Care-related **activities**
 - III. Carer **characteristics**
- in predicting four aspects of burden



Methodology

Participants: 228 colorectal cancer survivors & 153 carers in Ireland responded to survey

Patient questionnaire included measures of:

- **Objective health** (e.g. cancer stage)
- **Quality of life** (EORTC QLQ30)

Carer questionnaire included measures of:

- **Sociodemographic factors**
- **Care-related costs**
- **Caregiver reaction assessment (CRA)** scale to measure perceived burden

Analysis

- Four regression models with three blocks of predictors for each CRA burden domain

Block one

Patient health factors

- Stage of cancer
- Presence of stoma
- Undergone surgery
- Undergone chemotherapy
- Undergone radiography
- Global health status (GHS)

Block two

Care-related activities

- Time devoted to caring per week
- Out of pocket (OOP) costs per week
- Income change since diagnosis

Block three

Carer characteristics

- Age
- Gender
- Has children
- Relationship to patient
- Comorbid condition

Caregiver Burden (CRA scale)

Family support

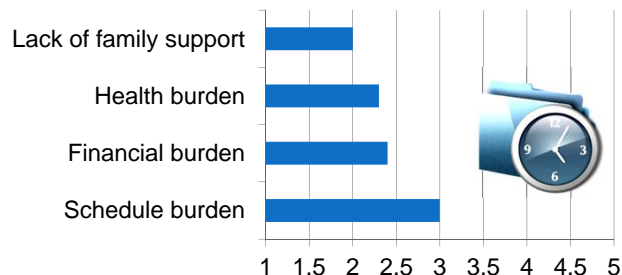
Financial burden

Schedule burden

Health burden

Results

Mean perceived burden of carers



Predictors of burden

(includes proportion of variance explained from each block)

Burden domain	Schedule burden	Financial burden	Health burden	Family support
Patient-health factors	17.1%* <i>GHS*</i> <i>Stoma*</i>	21.7%* <i>GHS*</i>	13.5%* <i>GHS*</i>	18.10% <i>Stoma**</i> <i>Chemo**</i>
Care-related activities	11.4%* <i>Time costs***</i>	9%* <i>OOP costs*</i>	7.2%* <i>Time costs**</i>	6%* <i>Time costs**</i>
Carer characteristics	4.50%	6% <i>Age**</i>	11.4%* <i>Children*</i> <i>Comorbid**</i>	5.60% <i>Spouse of patient*</i>
Total variance explained	33%***	37%***	32%***	30%***

* P < 0.05 ** p < 0.01 *** p < 0.001

Conclusions

Patient health key determinant of all aspects of carer burden.

- **Perceived QOL (GHS)** more important than objective disease course (e.g. stage)

Care-related activities adds to burden

- **Time costs** most important

Certain carers more **at risk** of experiencing certain aspects of burden

Implications

Results can help inform development of **interventions** to **better support** colorectal cancer caregivers and reduce burden of care

