

Web-based Video Conferencing Support Group Intervention for Caregivers of Persons with Neurodegenerative Disease

Donna Margles MSW RSW and Melissa Tafler MSW RSW

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Renee Climans MSW RSW and Elsa Marziali PhD

Baycrest

OBJECTIVES

- 1) Describe an intervention model of an online counseling group for caregivers
- 2) Discuss the research outcomes that contributed to the development of this evidence-based model
- 3) Highlight how the model has been applied to other populations
- 4) Explain how the model is being transitioned from an evidence-based research program to a service program.

The Model


- 10 weekly one hour online group sessions facilitated by a trained clinician
 - 10 additional weekly one hour online sessions in self-help mode
 - Participants log-in from a variety of locations including work, home and vacation
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The Intervention

The aim of our intervention is:

- a) To increase caregiver knowledge, efficacy and control
- b) To monitor the emotional and psychological dimensions of the caregiving experience
- c) To promote effective problem solving
- d) To optimize social support

Intervention Strategies

- Client-Centred
 - Unstructured-Open ended
 - Focused on self-reflection
 - Understanding impact of emotions on cognition and behaviour
 - Emphasis on the healing power of group process
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Caregiver Website

Caring for Others [CFO]©

Patient Website

Caring for Me [CFM]©

Website Features and Content

- Email
- Threaded Discussion
- Video Meeting (one on one)
- Video Meeting (group)
- Information Handbooks
- Educational Videos
- Questionnaires



Design Criteria for Older Adult Users

- Uncluttered web pages
- Large icons
- Sharp color contrasts
- Simple navigation
- Minimal use of keyboard
- Large font size
- Finding 'home'

The screenshot shows the 'Caring for Others' website. The header features the site name 'Caring for Others' in a large, blue, sans-serif font, with the 'Baycrest' logo in a teal box to the right. Below the header is a dark blue navigation bar. The main content area is white and contains a welcome message: 'Welcome to Caring for Others!'. On the left, a vertical sidebar contains a 'Logged in as:' field, a 'Logout' button with a computer monitor icon, and a 'Home' button with a house icon. Below these are five menu items: 'Video Meetings' (with a video call icon), 'Message Mail' (with an envelope icon), 'Discussion Forum' (with a 'Hi!' sign icon), and 'Resources' (with a person reading icon). The main content area is divided into four quadrants: 'Video Meetings' (top-left) with a video call icon, 'Message Mail' (top-right) with an envelope icon and the text 'You have 0 unread message(s)', 'Discussion Forum' (bottom-left) with a 'Hi!' sign icon, and 'Resources' (bottom-right) with a person reading icon. At the bottom, there is a font size selection section with the text 'If you like, please change your font size below:' and five radio button options: 'x-Small', 'Small', 'Medium', 'Large', and 'X-Large' (which is selected).

Caring for Others Baycrest

Welcome to Caring for Others!

Logged in as:

Logout

Home

Video Meetings

Message Mail

You have **0** unread message(s)

Discussion Forum

Resources

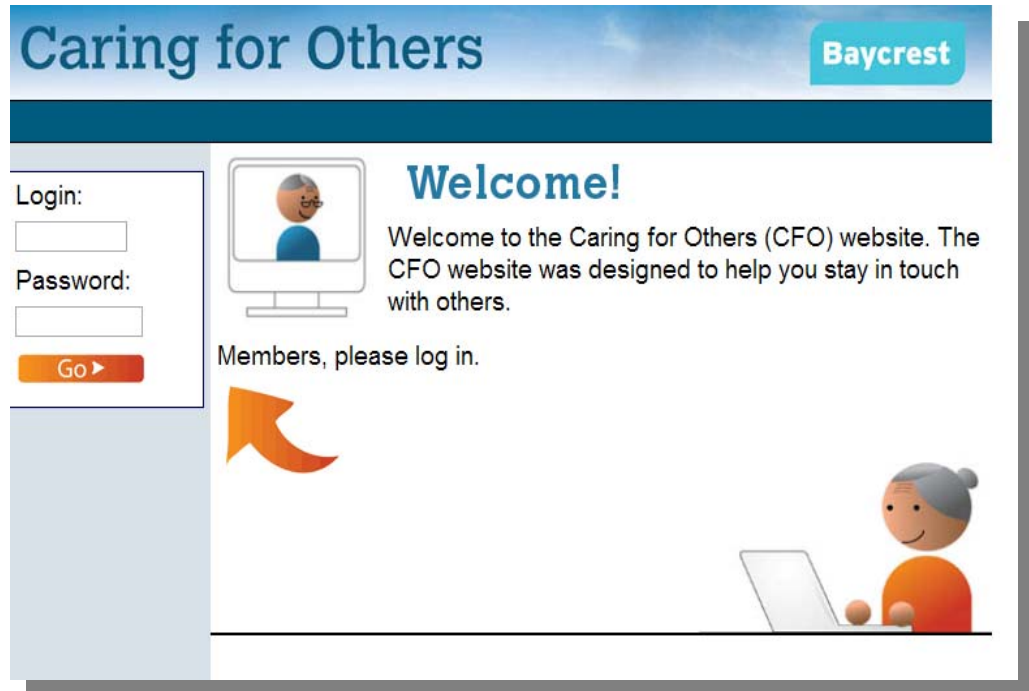
If you like, please change your font size below:

x-Small Small Medium Large X-Large



Security:

- Password protected
- Unique assignment to group
- Encryption



Login:

Password:

Go >

1. Meeting Participants (image)

2. Active Window (live video feed)

3. Request Speak button

The screenshot shows a video conference interface with several participants and a chat window. Annotations with orange lines point to specific elements:

- An orange line points from the text "1. Meeting Participants (image)" to a small portrait of a woman labeled "Freida".
- Another orange line points from "2. Active Window (live video feed)" to a larger, central video feed of a man labeled "John" wearing a headset. A blue "Request Speak" button (a speech bubble with an exclamation mark) is overlaid on the top right of his video feed.
- A third orange line points from "3. Request Speak button" to the blue "Request Speak" button on the man's video feed.

Other elements in the interface include:

- A chat window in the top right corner with the following text:
Freida: Hello!
Lisa: How is everyone?
Kate: I'm good!
- A text input field below the chat window with a blue "Send" button (a speech bubble with a checkmark).
- Other participant portraits: a man labeled "John" with ID: 371, a woman labeled "Lisa", a woman labeled "Karen", and a man labeled "Mike".
- A blue "Request Speak" button (a speech bubble with an exclamation mark) is also visible above the "Freida" portrait.


Unique Features of FTD

- Ages 40's-60's
- Behavioral and personality changes predominate in early stages and hence caregivers more burdened
- Many have dependent children
- Spouses are often working
- Often misdiagnosed as marital problems
- Complex caregiver role and increased rate of depression

FTD Spousal Support Group

- Members were from 3 provinces and 2 time zones
- Positive experience for the group members and facilitator
- Group bonding was as strong as in face to face groups

Benefits to Caregivers

- Lowered Stress
 - Supportive contact with other caregivers
 - Share knowledge and experiences
 - Improvement in well being
 - Contact with a health professional
 - Learn coping skills
 - Help with deciding timing of institutionalization
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Caring For Me

- Online model was adapted for use with individuals with chronic disease
- Fewer than 50% of older adults with chronic disability modify their lifestyle in accordance with recommended health guidelines
- We know little about patients ability to apply self-care information

The Group

- 14 week on-line group facilitated in May/June of 2010
- 5 Participants were individuals with Diabetes or CVA's
- Participants were struggling with maintaining rehab regimes and making long lasting lifestyle behaviour changes
- Website offered resources tailored to this population

Themes

- Need for emotional support was greater than the need for self-care information
- Negotiating difficult emotions, low self-esteem and negative self-image were the barriers to maintaining positive self care behaviours
- Online format was successful for this population

From Research to Practice

- Currently rolling out the online model from a research based program to a service
- Adaptable for use in a variety of clinical settings
- Clinicians excited about using technology as the platform for delivery of health care services to a variety of populations
- Ongoing program evaluation

Challenges

- Securing technical support for this service from IT
- Dedicated clinical time to coordinate and grow the service
- Some caregivers may not be comfortable with technology
- Professional practice licensing across geographic boundaries

Thank You

