

## BACKGROUND

- An estimated 1.2 million stroke survivors are currently living in the United Kingdom (Townsend et al., 2012) and majority of them rely on family caregivers to provide support.
- However, the support given to stroke family caregivers is not standard across most UK stroke services (CQC, 2011).
- Early identification of stroke family caregivers needs and support is crucial in order to sustain their caring role (Lutz, 2010).

“Gosh everything, your life’s changed, my whole life stopped when he had that stroke...” P10

“I thought this was all horrendously hard, and now I realised because we’re on our own how hard it is now, because it’s on my shoulders it’s not on no one else’s...” P2

“There’s questions that you wouldn’t even think of, because you’re too busy to even think, and some of them questions when you read them, and you think about them you think yeah that’s right...” P2

## AIMS

- To explore what stroke family caregivers find burdensome during caring post stroke.
- To seek their views about the CAT; an alert tool that was developed by researchers at Edge Hill University.

## RESULTS

- The majority of participants reported challenges dealing with their own emotions as well as the emotions and behaviours of the stroke survivor.
- Family caregivers also reported of changes to their social life and routine.
- There was a mention of lack of information on the support services available.
- Participants reported feeling overwhelmed with their caring role.
- Some family caregivers reported the need for respite.

- The majority of respondents who took part reported that the CAT would be a useful tool to identify and support the needs of stroke family carers.

- ## METHODS
- Qualitative semi-structured interviews with a purposive sample of 16 stroke family caregivers were conducted in the North West of England.
  - Research ethics approval was obtained.
  - Interviews were transcribed verbatim and a thematic approach adopted for analysis.

“His emotional side... that is where I think is our biggest hurdle...when he’s on a downer then I just cannot cope at all ...” P8

“you’re a ship without a rudder, there’s nothing, and you don’t know about the various pieces that you can get, the various supports that there are...” P5

“There’s times I’ll be honest with you...There’s times were you think; oh gosh, I cant keep going like this, because I haven’t had a day off in six years ...” P12

## CONCLUSION

These results support previous research findings and highlight that carers needs should be assessed regularly. Findings from this phase will inform the next phase of the study which is a Delphi survey to prioritise key themes for inclusion in the CAT(S).

### References

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