CONSISTENCIES IN SPOUSE SUPPORT ACROSS MEDICAL AND IN-HOME CONTEXTS


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• Over one third (36-39%) of older adult patients have a family member or friend accompany them to their medical care visits.

• Spouses’ are known to influence the course and content of medical encounter discussions.

Sources: Ishikawa et al., 2005; Rosland et al., 2011; Wolff & Roter, 2011
ACCOMPANIED MEDICAL ENCOUNTERS

• Dyadic models of the “physician-patient relationship” are predominant in medical encounter literature
• Accompanied medical encounter dialogue relatively unexplored
  • Couples share responsibility in illness management
  • Spouse support influences patient coping

Sources: Laidsaar-Powell et al., 2013; Yorgason et al., 2010
THE PROBLEM?

Less is known about family member influences on illness management and patient health outcomes.

Sources: Laidsaar-Powell et al., 2013; Yorgason et al., 2010
SPOUSE SUPPORT

• Consistent associations with patient health outcomes

• Suggested pathways of support benefits include aiding the patient in proper chronic illness management

• Diet-related support is associated with higher levels of patient diabetes management

Sources: Brody et al., 2008; Connell et al., 1992; Fitzgerald et al., 1997; Franks et al., 2006; Gallant, 2003; Glasgow & Toobert, 1988; Uchino, 2009
STUDY AIMS

I. To assess statements of spousal support provision in medical encounter dialogue in the context of diabetes management

II. To investigate the association of spouses’ support with patient receipt of diet-related support at home.
HYPOTHESES

I. Spouses would make statements of support provision during accompanied medical encounters

II. Statement of spouse support provision during accompanied medical encounters would be positively associated with patient receipt of diet-related support at home
Patient recruitment at endocrinology clinic

Patients and spouses filled out questionnaires

Participants agreed to have medical encounter audio recorded

Audio recordings professionally transcribed

REL-MED procedures used to code transcripts
Patient receipt of diet-related support was regressed on statements of spouse support provision support during the medical encounter, controlling for marital quality and patient self-rated health.
Aim 1
Statements of spouse support provision occurred in 25 of 56 (45%) medical encounters

Aim 2
Statements of spousal support provision were positively associated with patient receipt of diet-related support at home
CONCLUSION: THERE ARE CONSISTENCIES IN SPOUSE SUPPORT ACROSS MEDICAL AND IN-HOME CONTEXTS

- Healthcare professionals should recognize that spouses’ participation in routine medical visits may be providing useful information about their supportive behaviors in the home.

- Study findings…
  - Highlight correspondence of spouse and patient reports of spousal support in diabetes management.
  - Could inform future studies designed to evaluate spousal participation during medical encounters with patients managing chronic illness.