



# Supporting the Support System:

Ways to Effectively Work with Caregivers

Lunch & Learn June 16, 2020

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# No Conflicts

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# OUTLINE

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- Who are our Caregivers
- Supporting and Sustaining the Caregiver:
  - CARE and I-SEE-U
- Caring for those with Dementia
- Challenges of Transitions
- Caregiver Strengths
- Caregiver Stories
- What Can You Do
- Helpful Resources

# A point about language

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- Not always “loved-one”
- Alternate terms for the person being cared for:
  - Family member
  - Care recipient

# Who is an informal caregiver

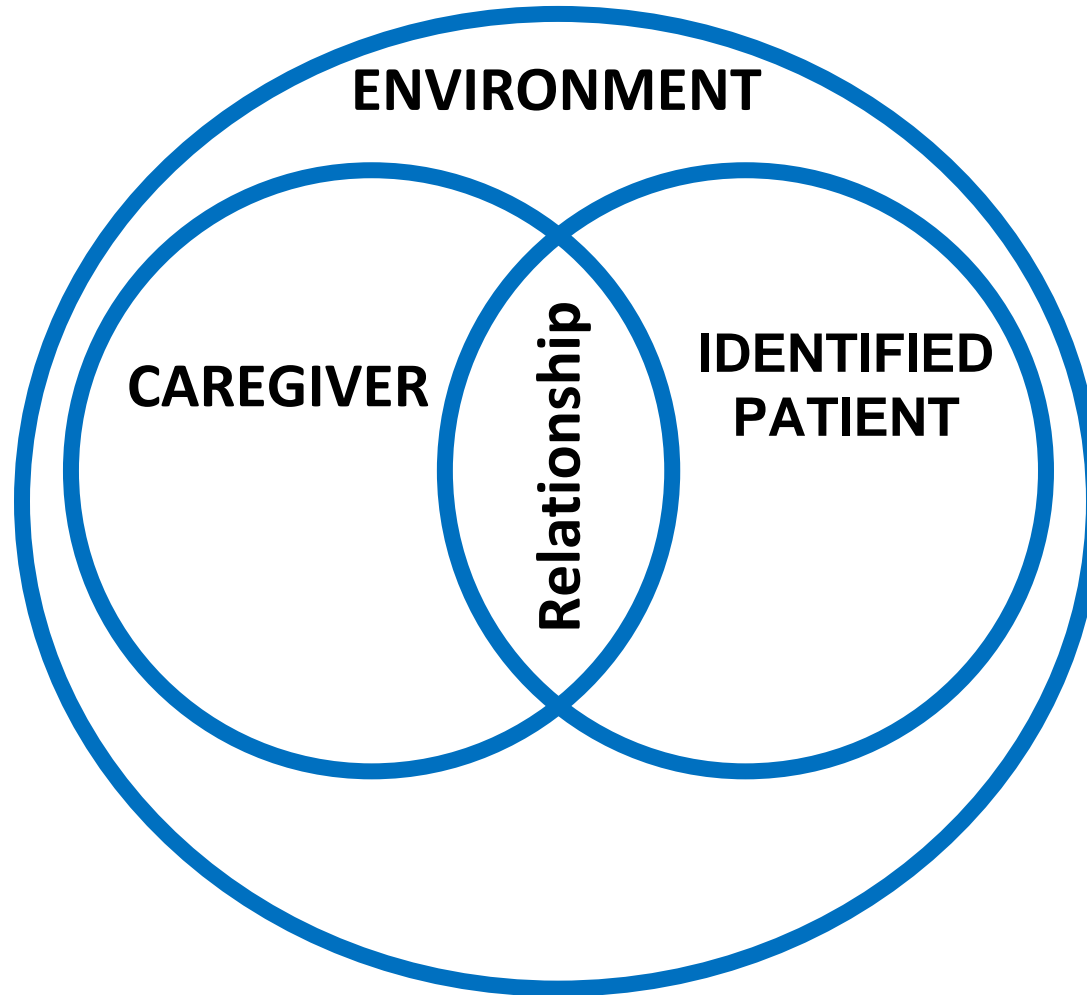
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- An informal caregiver (carer) is a person who takes on an unpaid caring role for someone who needs help because they are unable to care for themselves
- Caregiver burden describes the constellation of simultaneous hardships experienced by caregivers

Caregivers often feel alone and isolated in their role

# Dyad as the Unit of Care

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# How does a caregiver become a “shadow patient?”

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1. Caregivers often do not identify with that role
  - they tend to talk about the care recipient, not themselves
2. When caregivers are overwhelmed it can be very difficult for them to process information
3. It is important to understand the context so they can implement recommendations

# Consequences of caregiver burden

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- Physical:
  - Medication use
  - Increased mortality
  - Increased illness
- Psychological:
  - Depression
  - Substance use
  - Anger, anxiety, sadness, guilt



# Challenges of Care Transitions

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Transitioning between health care facilities and from hospital/rehab to home are particularly difficult, vulnerable times

Hands-on training of health condition and physical care to be done by caregivers when care recipient is discharged home is seldom provided

Phases of caregiving - information and support needs change - often goes unrecognized

# Caregiver Strengths

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Caregivers bring in-depth knowledge of the care recipient, and their home/community context

Caregivers can provide essential contributions to care planning for the care recipient

Team engagement with the caregiver can result in increased caregiver capacity - improved resource to the treatment team

# What Can You Do: CARE

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- **Communication:**
  - *between HCP's and CG's and within the HC system*
- **Assessment:**
  - *'How are You?'*
  - *What are your biggest challenges right now?*
  - *How do you feel you are managing/coping with the demands on you?*
  - *How do you get support when you need it?*
- **Recognition:**
  - *Both caregivers themselves and HCP's need to be identified; recognize/acknowledge the role and responsibilities*
- **Education/Support:**
  - *Information about the healthcare condition over time, Hands-on training, emotional, financial support*

# Shared Experiences

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# Caregivers As Partners e modules

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<https://elearning.changeofoundation.ca>

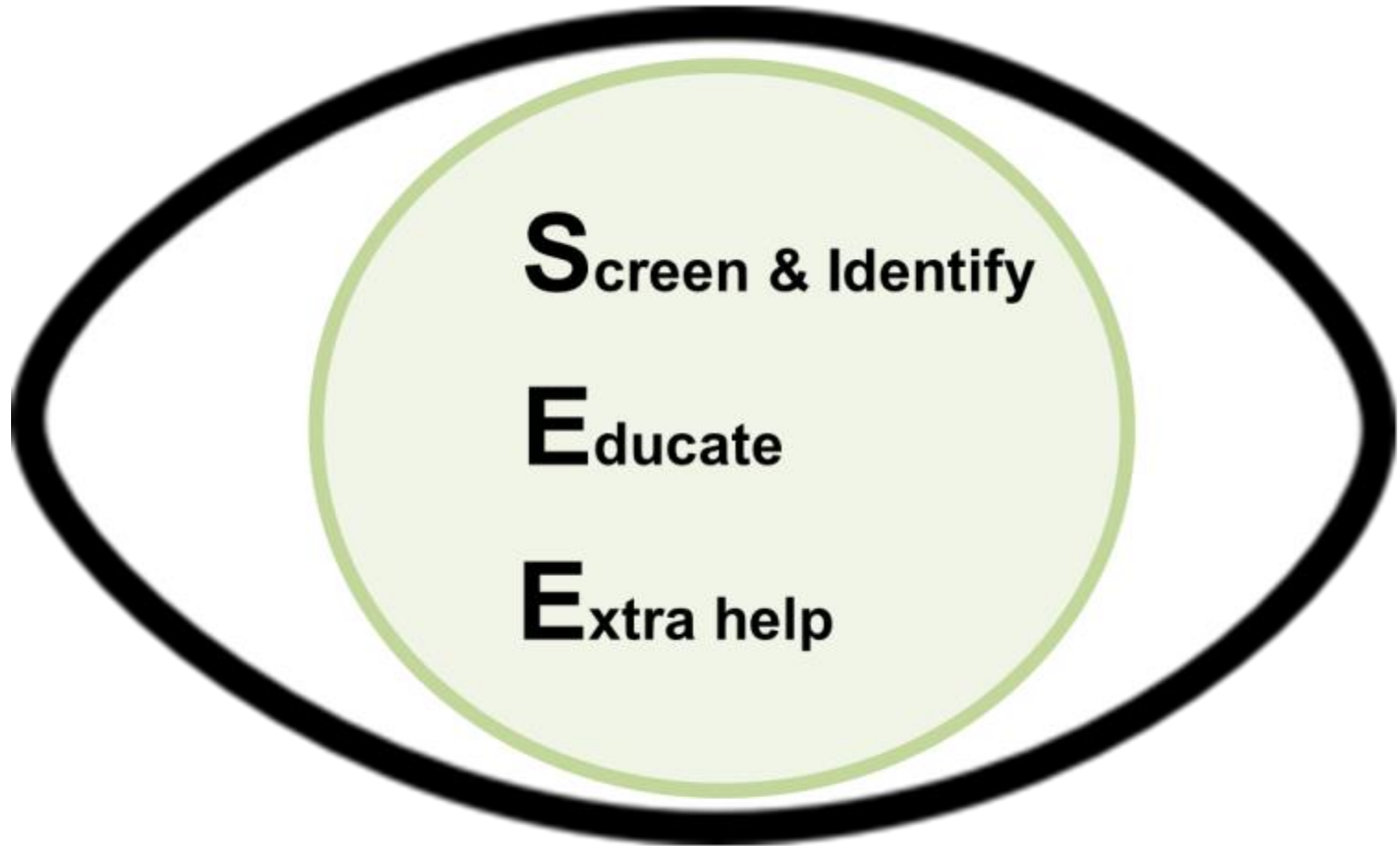
Caregivers as Partners is a 3-part series that has been co-designed and developed by providers and family caregivers in partnership with the Changing CARE project

20 minute modules focused on how providers can better engage and support family caregivers – topics include:

1. Understanding the Role of Caregivers
2. Communicating with Caregivers
3. Empowering Caregivers

**I -SEE-U**

**I** Include



**U**nderstand



Sinai Health System

THE CYRIL & DOROTHY, JOEL & JILL  
REITMAN CENTRE FOR ALZHEIMER'S  
SUPPORT AND TRAINING

# Reitman Centre Programs

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Assessment

Groups

Caregivers, Care Recipient, Dyad

Individual Therapy

# Reitman Centre's CARERS Group

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## Coaching **A**dvocacy **R**espice **E**ducation **R**elationship **S**imulation

- 8 Weekly 2 hour sessions
  - 6 caregivers max
  - Therapist & Standardized Patient
  - Zoom and in-person
  
- Improve Competence & Mastery through Skill Development
  - Problem Solving
  - Communication



# Dementia Advisor App

- Free
- Education app
- 20 challenging communication scenarios
- Uses text-chatting to simulate conversations

**DEMENTIA  
ADVISOR  
APP**

Get expert  
coaching and advice

Get advice from a  
leading dementia  
expert, Dr. Joel  
Sadavoy.

Head of Geriatric Psychiatry  
Services and Director of the  
Reitman Centre for Alzheimer's  
Training and Support, Sinai Health  
System.

Skip tutorial

**Dementia Advisor — a mobile app designed by  
Sinai Health System Cyril & Dorothy, Joel & Jill  
Reitman Centre for Alzheimer's Support and  
Training — helps family caregivers learn how to**

## Contacts & Website

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CARE e-learning Modules

<https://elearning.changefoundation.ca/>

Reitman Centre at 60 Murray Street

416-586-4800 x5882

[ReitmanInquiries.MSH@sinaihealth.ca](mailto:ReitmanInquiries.MSH@sinaihealth.ca)

[www.dementiacarers.ca](http://www.dementiacarers.ca)

Caregiver Helpline: 1-833-416-2273

## Additional Resources: Including COVID related

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thehealthline.ca

<https://ontariocaregiver.ca/>  
supports, webinars and a mentoring site

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# Thank You!

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