The Healthy Siblings’ Caring Experience of Schizophrenic Patients with Home Visit Care

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Purpose
To explore the healthy siblings’ experience for taking care of the community-resident schizophrenic patients with home visit care.

Methods
A qualitative research design was adopted and 15 participants were recruited from a medical center in the central part of Taiwan. Data were collected by a semi-structured interview guide. To analyze the data, the method proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994) was applied.

Results
Since the community-resident schizophrenic patients needed the support from their siblings just like Cuscuta attached to its host. In addition to symptom management and compliance with treatments, participants returned to the community still required the assistance from their siblings. Four sentences from 19 Old Poems were adopted to present the siblings’ experience.

First, “Frail bamboo growing alone”: the family started the journey to understand and take care of the patients.

Second, “Tying its roots into the slopes of Mt. Tai”: It described the struggling and tangling feeling of the siblings who took over the caring load.

Third, “Holding the high moral standards”: With no fear for the dependence and barriers, the healthy siblings continue to take care of the patients.

Fourth, “The sweet fragrance fills the breast and sleeves”: It showed the siblings’ expectation of companion and thrive in the future.

Conclusion
The study found that the process of care for schizophrenic siblings if full of hardship and stress. To help the healthy siblings to continue their support, health professionals should guide them to recognize and emphasize the positive caregiver rewards. On the other hand, more job training and opportunities are suggested. Moreover, respite care service could also be launched to provide appropriate support and assistance. It can not only reduce the siblings’ stress and burden but also promote the patients’ life quality.