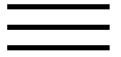


The influence of culture on home-based family caregiving at end-of-life: A case study of Dutch reformed family care givers in Ontario, Canada.

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Volume 72, Issue 3, February 2011, Pages 338-346

The influence of culture on home-based family caregiving at end-of-life: A case study of Dutch reformed family care givers in Ontario, Canada

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<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2010.10.010>

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Abstract

Families are facing increased pressure to provide care to their terminally-ill or dying kin in the home. It is known that balancing care with other personal and social roles can adversely affect family caregivers' (FCGs) health, yet access to supportive services which can mitigate burden is often inadequate. Cultural factors are known to shape the experience of caregiving; however, most research to date tends to neglect the experiences of FCGs from different cultural groups. This understanding is necessary to ensure that supportive services are both meaningful and culturally-appropriate. Using qualitative methods, we undertook longitudinal research with a sample of Dutch

Reformed FCGs ( $n = 5$ ) to understand their experiences of caregiving and bereavement. The results of the study are suggestive of a cultural specificity with respect to caregiving that impacts both responsibilities and reactions to care. Three themes were salient to this group as a cultural entity: *cultural attitudes towards care, religious beliefs and coping, and culturally-informed care-seeking behaviours*. These three themes were seen to be a function of their religious and ethnic identities and were reinforced by ties to the communities in which they resided. Cultural identity provided a framework through which to understand and make sense of the experience, while group membership provided access to networks of informal support. This research contributes to the geographical literature on care/caregiving by providing insight into the social, cultural and religious context of informal family caregiving with a population who live in close geographic proximity. On a practical level, this case study indicates the importance of considering how these factors may operate in other settings in order to implement timely and appropriate interventions to better support FCGs who are caring for their terminally-ill loved-ones at home.



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## Keywords

Family caregiving; Palliative/end-of-life care; Canada; Dutch reformed; Religion; Health; Culture

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