

## Abstract

**Background:** In light of the importance of caregiver burden of patients with schizophrenia in Hong Kong, this study aimed to (1) validate the Chinese version of the Perceived Family Burden Scale (CPFBS) and (2) explore the pattern and determinants of burden of caregivers of patients with schizophrenia.

**Methods:** One hundred and eight patients with schizophrenia and their respective caregiver dyads were recruited from a psychiatric out-patient clinic. The CPFBS and the Chinese version of General Health Questionnaire-12 (GHQ-12) were administered to the caregivers. The caregivers were also assessed by the psychiatrist with the Structured Clinical Interview for DSM-IV Axis I Disorders (SCID). Patients were assessed with the Positive and Negative Syndrome Scale (PANSS) and the Global Assessment Functioning Scale (GAF). Construct validity, concurrent validity, internal consistency and test-retest reliability of the CPFBS were determined. The relationship between the burden of caregivers and the clinical and socio-demographic correlates of patients were explored.

**Results:** Concurrent validity of CPFBS was established by a significant correlation with the GHQ-12 ( $r_s=0.68$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). Construct validity was demonstrated by the significant correlation with the GAF ( $r_s = -0.76$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) and PANSS ( $r_s=0.85$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) and was

supported by factor analysis. The CPFBS was shown to have high internal consistency (Cronbach's  $\alpha=0.83$ ) and test-retest reliability ( $ICC=0.93$ ). The average time of CPFBS administration was 10.1 minutes. The severity of mental illness and the functional level of patients, the number of years of living together and the presence of psychiatric morbidity of caregivers are shown to be significant predicting factors for caregivers' burden.

**Conclusion:** The CPFBS is a brief, valid and reliable tool for assessing the caregiving burden of the caregivers of patients with schizophrenia. The findings suggested that interventions focusing on alleviating caregiving burden should address the mental health of caregivers in addition to minimize the symptoms of patient and to elevate patient's functioning.

**Key words:** schizophrenia, caregivers, burden, Hong Kong, CPFBS