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## Health Providers Perspectives on the Access and Use of Formal Health and Social Services by Stroke Caregivers

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## **Health Providers Perspectives on the Access and Use of Formal Health and Social Services by Stroke Caregivers**

Informal stroke caregivers, comprised of family and friends, can experience prolonged stress that places them at risk of poor health and social outcomes. These caregivers may benefit from formal health and social services, but they are often underused and inaccessible. This qualitative study sought to explore health providers' perspectives on the factors that impact stroke caregivers' access and use of formal health and social services. In-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 18 health providers. Resultant themes include, health system fragmentation contributes to a lack of continuity of care; gaps in health providers' knowledge and heavy workloads negatively impact service accessibility; persons living with stroke and their caregivers are inextricably linked, but caregivers need be recognized as individuals; providing a single access point for follow-up is essential for success. Health providers are critical stakeholders due to their rich understanding of this issue, highlighting the importance of their involvement in caregiver initiatives.