



## Reply to: “Informal caregiver quality of life in a palliative oncology population”

Kohei Kajiwara<sup>1</sup> · Jun Kako<sup>1</sup> · Hiroko Noto<sup>2</sup> · Yasufumi Oosono<sup>3</sup> · Masamitsu Kobayashi<sup>4</sup>

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To the editor,

We read with interest, the recent article titled, “Informal caregiver quality of life in a palliative oncology population” by Duimering et al. [1], in which the authors concluded that identification of factors relating to lower quality of life (QOL) for informal caregivers, including additional employment, cohabitation with the patient, poor patient performance status, and expressing the wish to provide more assistance, should actuate the healthcare team to identify the vulnerable informal caregivers.

The perspective of QOL is important for informal caregivers at home. Duimering et al. found that additional employment, cohabitation, poor patient performance status, and expression of interest in more assistance significantly related to a lower QOL [1]. Moreover, the author reported that informal caregivers’ gender and relationship with the patient did not show significant correlations. However, previous research reported that the caregivers’ age and relationship with the patient were related to the QOL of caregivers of patients with cancer [2, 3]. The impact of caregivers’ personal characteristics on their QOL may not be consistent. In-home caregiving is a complex process. Therefore, caregivers’ QOL needs support that should consider their personal characteristics.

Duimering et al. indicated that support in activities of daily living (ADL) and medical tasks significantly decreased QOL

of informal caregivers [1]. Previous research showed similar results that impaired patient function was related to lower QOL for caregivers [4]. Moreover, Reed et al. reported that increasing functional impairments for persons with Alzheimer’s disease dementia were related to increased caregiving time and costs for informal caregivers [5]. The author suggested that caregivers would be receptive to assistance [1]. We agree with this point. We think that the decrease in cancer patients’ ADL will increase the caregiving tasks. Vandepitte et al. indicated the importance of respite care for caregivers of persons with dementia at home [6]. Therefore, we believe that it is necessary to improve QOL to secure the utilization of support service that can provide respite to caregivers.

Undoubtedly, it is important to focus on the factors related to the QOL of caregivers of cancer patients. Hence, the study conducted by Duimering et al. provides useful data. We believe that this study will lead to the effective use of support services to improve QOL for informal caregivers.

### Compliance with ethical standards

**Conflict of interest** The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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✉ Kohei Kajiwara  
kkaji@hiroshima-u.ac.jp

<sup>1</sup> Division of Nursing Science, Graduate School of Biomedical and Health Sciences, Hiroshima University, 1-2-3, Kasumi, Minami-ku, Hiroshima 734-8553, Japan

<sup>2</sup> Department of Health Science, Graduate School of Medical Sciences, Kyushu University, Fukuoka, Japan

<sup>3</sup> Community Health Nursing, National Defense Medical College, Tokorozawa, Japan

<sup>4</sup> Faculty of Nursing, National Defense Medical College, Tokorozawa, Japan

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