

Poster presentation

HIV/AIDS Family Caregiving Experiences

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The purpose of this grounded theory study was to describe the experience of HIV/AIDS family caregiving in the palliative phase. Seven in-depth interviews were conducted and analyzed using the constant comparative method. The analysis resulted in a conceptualization of HIV/AIDS family caregiving. This paper describes the "personal work" of caregivers, including reconciling that a loved one would die, making life-and-death decisions, and letting go. The nature of support received to attend to this work is highlighted, with attention to its influences on HIV/AIDS caregiver bereavement. The findings of this study provide some insights into the HIV/AIDS family caregiver experience and reveal a significant need for interventions designed to support caregivers in establishing the mechanisms required for bereavement resolution. The need for the creation of supportive networks for HIV/AIDS caregivers cannot be overstated. Further research is required to help clarify and expand on how social support might have an effect on HIV/AIDS family caregiver bereavement. With this knowledge, health-care providers will be better prepared to anticipate difficulties faced by caregivers, plan appropriate interventions to address these difficulties, prevent future problems, and plan care based on theory and research.