

THE ROLE OF FAMILY/CAREGIVERS IN MANAGEMENT OF DELIRIUM

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Delirium is a prevalent neuropsychiatric syndrome in elderly patients hospitalized, associated with negative clinical outcomes. In this context, the early identification, timely and optimal management of people with delirium are fundamental in the treatment. According to the current recommendations from NICE, once delirium occurs, non-pharmacological interventions should be considered as the first-line, with identification of any possible underlying causes, providing supportive care and preventing complications and treating behavioural problems.

Family and caregivers involvement by health professionals is also recommend, for an effective management of this clinical condition.

The present study aims to present an update about the role of family in the management of delirium.

Its presence becomes beneficial to the patient, helping protect against emotions of fear, anxiety, loneliness or isolation. They can also facilitate effective communication, using some strategies such as verbal reorientation, clear instructions, eye contact, making the patient feel more secure.

On the other hand, the education of families and caregivers by health professionals about delirium symptoms, fluctuating course, possible causes, as well as treatment options, becomes also crucial to the management of this syndrome.

The present work is supported by FCT (Foundation for Science and Technology) PhD fellowships (SFRH/BD/63154/2009 - S. Martins).