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### UNJUSTLY NEGLECTED: SIBLINGS OF PEOPLE WITH A SCHIZOPHRENIC PSYCHOSIS

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**Objective:** Siblings of individuals suffering from schizophrenia are often overseen as relatives in need in clinical practice and they are an underrepresented group in research focussing on the needs of carers and relatives of psychiatric patients. We investigated differences between siblings and parents as well as spouses, in regards to help seeking, utilisation of an open group for relatives, their subjective burden and quality of life.

**Methods:** 147 relatives of in-patients and patients attending a day hospital were assessed using the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ), Family Problem Questionnaire (FPQ), WHO Quality of Life-BREF (WHOQOL-BREF) and a questionnaire inquiring about their utilisation of various sources of information and help throughout the course of the illness.

**Results:** Siblings had less contact with patients compared to both parents and spouses, and their quality of life showed less impairment than that of the other groups. However, siblings' subjective burden was comparable to that of spouses. Still, compared to the other groups, they reported significantly less utilisation of any source of information and help and were far less likely to be invited to support offers specifically aimed at relatives.

**Conclusions:** Siblings of patients with schizophrenia are a particularly neglected group regarding support aimed at relatives. They are heavily distressed, yet there is little offer of professional support for them.