

Rehabilitation Nursing Foundation
Abstract Form

FEL #0905

In 250-350 words, define the research problem, state the significance of the research, and present the research methodology and plan for analysis. **DO NOT USE A SEPARATE SHEET.**

Persons on prolonged mechanical ventilation (PMV) represent a large portion of the chronically critically ill, those who survive the acute stage of critical illness but often require long-term rehabilitation due to profound weakness and multi-system derangement. Due to the long-term recovery trajectory in persons on PMV, understanding stress in family caregivers is vital for rehabilitation nurses in planning care. Research has shown high levels of negative psychological and behavioral responses in caregivers of persons with other chronic diseases (e.g., dementia), which often affects caregivers' health. Despite known psychological distress among caregivers of persons on PMV, there is limited understanding of the extent of this stress over the continuum of illness (ICU admission to post discharge). This pilot study, using the Pittsburgh Mind-Body Center Model, aims to: 1) evaluate the feasibility of conducting a longitudinal study involving psychological, behavioral, and biological responses in caregivers of persons on PMV (care recipient); 2) explore how caregivers' personal characteristics, psychological, behavioral, and biological responses and overall health change over time (from ICU admission to ICU discharge to 2 months after ICU discharge); and 3) explore the following relationships at ICU admission, ICU discharge, and 2 months after ICU discharge: a) care recipients' characteristics, caregivers' personal characteristics and caregivers' psychological/behavioral responses; b) caregivers' psychological/behavioral responses and caregivers' biological responses; and c) caregivers' biological responses and caregivers' overall health. Forty dyads of caregivers and persons on PMV (≥ 4 days on mechanical ventilation) will be enrolled. Data collection will occur at ICU admission, ICU discharge, and 2 months after ICU discharge. Feasibility will be evaluated using descriptive statistics including recruitment and retention rates. To explore the potential longitudinal changes of caregivers' responses and relationships among responses, trends of changes in descriptive statistics and correlation coefficients will be used. Findings from this study will be vital in developing timely interventions to prevent negative health outcomes in this group of family caregivers. This study is highly significant to the focus of RNF's research agenda on caregiving in relation to disability and chronic health problems. Findings will support the next level of RNF agenda focusing on developing a rehabilitation program that can benefit the individual and family across the continuum of care.