

Caregiving factors may affect hospitalization risk among disabled older adults

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Few studies have investigated the potential impact of caregivers and caregiver factors on older adults' likelihood of being hospitalized. A recent study published in the *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*

has now provided some insights.

The study included 2,589 community-living Medicare fee-for-service beneficiaries aged 65 years and older who were disabled and were receiving help from [family members](#) or other unpaid caregivers. Thirty-eight percent of the older adults were hospitalized within one year after being interviewed.

Older adults had an increased risk of hospitalization if they had a primary [caregiver](#) who helped with healthcare tasks, reported physical strain, and provided more than 40 hours of care weekly. Having a caregiver who had helped for at least 4 years was associated with a lower risk of hospitalization. These caregiving factors were associated with hospitalization risk regardless of whether older adults had dementia.

"This study brings attention to key individuals often overlooked when thinking about how to prevent hospitalization in vulnerable groups of older adults: caregivers," said lead author Halima Amjad, MD, MPH, of Johns Hopkins University. "Policies or interventions that target aspects of caregiving we identified in this study should be explored as strategies to reduce risk of hospitalization in [older adults](#) living with disability."

More information: Halima Amjad et al, Do Caregiving Factors Affect Hospitalization Risk Among Disabled Older Adults?, *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society* (2020). [DOI: 10.1111/jgs.16817](https://doi.org/10.1111/jgs.16817)

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