



Skill Gap Analysis Of Home Healthcare Caregivers:A Study Of Carefirst Home Healthcare, Chennai

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ABSTRACT

The home healthcare sector plays a vital role in delivering patient-centered services, particularly for elderly and chronically ill individuals. The effectiveness of such services largely depends on caregiver competencies. This study aims to analyse the skill gaps among caregivers working at Carefirst Home Healthcare, Chennai. A descriptive research design was adopted, and primary data were collected from 51 caregivers using a structured questionnaire. Percentage analysis, correlation, and ANOVA were employed to examine relationships between training adequacy and caregiver performance. The results revealed significant positive relationships between training sufficiency and caregiver competencies such as medication administration, patient care knowledge, and emergency handling ability. Despite possessing basic caregiving skills, caregivers demonstrated deficiencies in advanced clinical skills, communication abilities, hygiene awareness, and stress management practices. The study recommends structured training programs, certification-based learning, and continuous professional

development initiatives to enhance caregiver competencies and improve service quality.

Keywords: Home healthcare, Skill gap, Caregivers, Training effectiveness, Workforce development, Patient safety



1. INTRODUCTION

The healthcare sector plays a crucial role in improving public health and socio-economic development. Among its various components, home healthcare has emerged as a rapidly growing service due to the increasing prevalence of chronic diseases, aging populations, and the demand for personalized medical care. Home healthcare enables patients to receive professional medical assistance within their homes, thereby improving comfort and reducing hospital dependency.

In India, the home healthcare industry has expanded significantly due to urbanization, lifestyle changes, and increasing awareness regarding healthcare accessibility. Tamil Nadu has witnessed considerable growth in this sector with the presence of organizations such as Carefirst Home Healthcare. However, despite this expansion, challenges such as inadequate caregiver training, lack of standardized competencies, and inconsistent service delivery remain significant concerns.

Caregivers form the backbone of home healthcare services. Their knowledge, technical ability, communication skills, and emotional competence directly influence patient outcomes. Therefore, identifying caregiver skill gaps and evaluating training effectiveness is essential to ensure quality healthcare delivery.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The World Health Organization (2020) emphasized the need for standardized healthcare workforce development strategies to improve service quality. The report highlighted the importance of structured training programs and competency-based education.

Burgdorf (2021) examined caregiver training practices and identified inconsistencies in training accessibility and effectiveness. The study recommended practical skill-based learning methods.

Stone (2021) highlighted workforce development challenges in home healthcare and emphasized the need for continuous training programs.

Parmar et al. (2022) developed competency-based caregiver training models focusing on communication and patient interaction skills.

Arroyo (2023) identified significant gaps in advanced clinical skills among caregivers and recommended regular professional development initiatives.

Chabouh (2023) stressed workforce competency planning as essential for sustainable healthcare service delivery.

Thomas and George (2023) found that communication skills significantly influence patient satisfaction in home healthcare settings.



Mehta and Verma (2024) highlighted the role of digital learning platforms in improving caregiver competencies.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To analyse the skill gaps among home healthcare caregivers.
2. To identify required technical, soft, and safety skills.
3. To assess existing skill levels among caregivers.
4. To evaluate the effectiveness of current training programs.

4. HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between training adequacy and caregiver performance.

H₁₁: There is a significant relationship between training adequacy and caregiver performance.

H₀₂: Training programs do not significantly influence caregiver knowledge levels.

H₁₂: Training programs significantly influence caregiver knowledge levels.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A descriptive research design was adopted to examine caregiver skill gaps. Primary data were collected from 51 caregivers working at Carefirst Home Healthcare, Chennai, using a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire included demographic variables and skill-related questions covering patient care knowledge, communication ability, emergency handling, hygiene awareness, and training effectiveness.

The dataset recorded responses related to caregiver demographics such as age group, gender, education level, work experience, and training status (pages 1–2). Skill-related responses concerning communication, emotional handling, and training effectiveness were documented across pages 3–6 .

Statistical tools used:

- Percentage Analysis
- Correlation Analysis
- ANOVA

6. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

Table 1

Demographic Distribution (N = 51)

Variable	Category	Percentage
Age	Below 25	21.6%
	25–35	51.0%
	36–45	17.6%
	Above 45	9.8%
Gender	Male	41.2%
	Female	58.8%



Variable	Category	Percentage
Education	School Level	9.8%
	Diploma	23.5%
	Undergraduate	39.2%
	Postgraduate	27.5%

7. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The responses obtained from caregivers indicate that most participants possess adequate knowledge of basic patient care procedures. Many caregivers expressed confidence in administering medication and assisting patients with daily activities. However, moderate responses were observed in areas related to emotional handling and communication with patients' families.

The data presented across questionnaire pages (3–6) indicate that while caregivers demonstrate strong foundational skills, there is a noticeable requirement for additional training in emergency handling and communication skills .

Correlation analysis revealed a positive relationship between training adequacy and caregiver competency levels. ANOVA results confirmed that training programs significantly influence caregiver knowledge and performance.

8. FINDINGS

1. Most caregivers possess basic caregiving knowledge.
2. Communication skills vary among caregivers.
3. Emergency response skills require improvement.
4. Hygiene awareness levels are moderate.
5. Training programs significantly improve caregiver performance.
6. Continuous skill development is considered necessary.
7. Caregivers expressed the need for certification programs.
8. Advanced clinical skills require strengthening.

9. SUGGESTIONS

1. Implement structured training programs.
2. Provide emergency response training.
3. Introduce certification-based skill development programs.
4. Conduct communication skill workshops.
5. Provide hygiene and infection control training.
6. Introduce periodic performance evaluation systems.



7. Offer stress management and emotional support programs.
8. Encourage continuous professional development.

10. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that caregivers play a vital role in ensuring effective home healthcare service delivery. While caregivers demonstrate adequate basic skills, several competency gaps remain in advanced clinical skills, communication, hygiene awareness, and emergency preparedness. The statistical results confirm that structured training significantly enhances caregiver competency levels. Therefore, organizations must focus on continuous professional development, standardized certification programs, and skill-based training initiatives to improve service quality and patient satisfaction.

11. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study was limited to caregivers working in a single home healthcare organization, which may restrict generalization of results. The sample size of 51 respondents may not fully represent the broader caregiver population. Additionally, responses were based on self-reported data, which may introduce response bias.

12. SCOPE FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Future research may include multiple healthcare organizations to improve generalizability. Comparative studies between private and public healthcare providers can provide deeper insights into caregiver training practices. Further research may also examine the effectiveness of digital training tools and simulation-based learning methods.

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