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SHAREHOLDING NETWORKS FOR CARE IN RURAL THAILAND: EXPERIENCES OF OLDER PERSONS AND THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS

Abstract:

Most members of the older population in Thailand live in rural areas while their children live in cities. With the joint family system separated, elderly Thai persons often have to care for themselves, and opportunities for them to get involved in community care remain limited. In response, the aim of this study was to describe older persons' and their family members' experiences with shareholding networks for the care of older people in rural Thailand. Paired interviews with five older persons and five of their family members were conducted, and collected data were subjected to content analysis, which yielded results organized around two themes: older persons' outsider status and disregard for older persons' individuality. Whereas the theme of outsider status describes shortcomings in health care encounters, the theme of disregard for individuality describes the lack of engagement of authorities and caregivers in older persons' care. In that sense, the concept of participation emerged as a framework for understanding interviewees' experiences. Given findings from local authorities, older individuals and their family members should engage in dialogue in order to support healthcare based on shared understanding.

Keywords:

Community Healthcare, Content Analysis, Older Persons, Participation

JEL Classification: I19, I18, I10