

## **Factors Affecting Family Caregivers to Participate in Support Groups<sup>1</sup>**

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As part of the growing recognition of the important role of family caregivers in providing care for their elderly loved ones, the National Insurance Institute, in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Affairs and various NGOs, initiated a project to support family caregivers. The project included 77 groups offering support and information. Group meetings took place between the end of 2011 and the beginning of 2013. Each group held 12 weekly meetings.

This article explores the factors affecting family caregivers to participate in support groups.

The findings are based on telephone interviews with a representative sample of 408 of the project's participants. The interviews took place at the onset of the group activities.

The findings reveal that the caregivers joined the support groups in order to receive socio-psychological support and in order to gain information on the rights, services and diseases of old age. They attributed secondary importance to the wish to have some respite and take a "time-out" from caregiving. Attendance of males, Haredi (ultra-Orthodox) and Arabs was relatively low. If there was a formal caregiver, the family member was able to attend the meeting.

These findings may assist in structuring programs for group meetings in a way that is best suited to the needs and preferences of the caregivers.

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2 Myers-JDC-Brookdale Institute.