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Opinion

Caregivers of People in Situations of Dependency in Spain

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Opinion

To understand the subject a little, I will probably start by explaining what a person in a situation of dependency is according to Law 39/2006, of December 14, on the promotion of personal autonomy and care for people in a situation of dependence in Spain: 'People in a situation of dependency are those who, permanently and for reasons of age, illness or disability, require the attention of another person to carry out activities of daily living such as personal care, housework or mobility'. The function of caring for these people in a situation of dependency has fallen since ancient times on their family environment, especially on the female figure, this being a job without any remuneration. Currently, in Spain the panorama has changed considerably after the incorporation of women in the labor market, delay in the age of marriage, growth in life expectancy or difficulties in interpersonal relationships has led to a relapse in the provision of care for people in a situation of dependency by this female family figure. In Spain, there are about 1,000,000 people with some degree of dependency. Most of these people require specific care since they cannot carry out basic/vital tasks on their own. For this, the intervention of the caregivers is necessary. Mainly, these people must require recognition of said condition in order to access the benefits and services corresponding to their dependency. Among them we can find: telecare service, day centers and at night, a residential care center and the most important for said research, the care provision. This fact has brought with it the incorporation of formal care and its professionalization but, despite this, informal care by relatives has continued and continues to persist, especially of this female figure. There are more professionals who care for people in a situation of dependency, despite the fact that informal care by the family environment still persists.

Regarding the profile that predominates in the performance of this care, they are usually women who have assumed the role of care in the family environment and whose age usually ranges between 45-64 years (in the case of informal care). But between professional care and informal care there is a common link and the following question arises: What is the situation of caregivers of people in a situation of dependency? To what extent can the emotional overload reach? Do they in turn receive any help or emotional support? Careers of dependent people. The physical health of careers is in the spotlight because as they carry out their work, more physical and emotional deterioration occurs. This last fact is remarkable especially in informal caregivers due to their close relationship with the dependent person. Informal caregivers are forced to carry out this care due to the close bond that unites them with the dependent person, coming to have internal pressure in the performance of care tasks and producing the so-called 'burnt caregiver syndrome'. A person is dependent when they are unable to carry out activities of daily living on their own and therefore need help, support. Dependence affects all ages, although a higher percentage resides in the elderly and people with disabilities.

In the transit of these cares they are approached and in the perspective of having to endure physical aggressions, verbal aggressions or laments; pressure from the person in a situation of dependency and moments of authority; stress and negativity in wanting to contribute to the development of their care: feeding, cleaning, sleeping, changing diapers. These caregivers are the emotional, material or informational support for these people. They must be provided with the necessary tools and resources, especially in informal caregivers, to be able to carry out care in the family environment, since no one in this situation has the required or necessary training to be able to carry out this procedure on a daily basis. Regardless of the condition, professional or informal, it is necessary to reach a joint learning of how to serve as comprehensive support for the person in a situation of dependency and satisfy the established needs. Equity at the social level with respect to care and follow-up in people in a situation of dependency and caregivers.