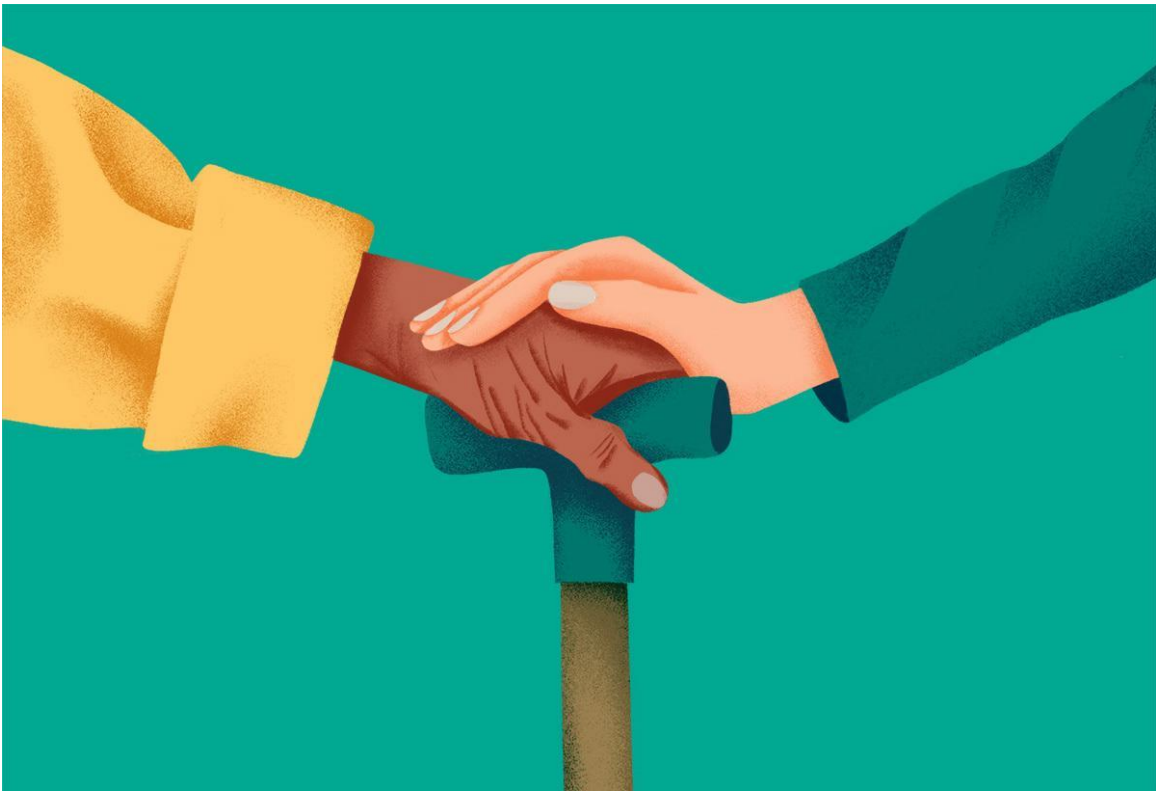




## Navigating Dementia Care: New study reveals daily battles such as balancing dementia support with self-care



Singapore, September 21, 2023 – [Milieu Insight](#), an award-winning consumer research firm in Southeast Asia recently completed a joint study in partnership with [Dementia Singapore](#) aimed at shedding light on the profound challenges and experiences by caregivers who provide support to Persons Living with Dementia (PLWDs). The study was conducted in July 2023 surveying N=1,500 respondents, representative of the Singapore general population.

Caregiving for PLWDs is undeniably arduous, with a staggering 74% of caregivers admitting to feeling overwhelmed by their responsibilities. This study brings to light the prominent challenges faced by these unsung heroes, many of which are emotional and

mental in nature. This marks an essential step towards raising awareness and providing much-needed support for caregivers who play a pivotal role in the lives of PLWDs.

Milieu Insight's Chief Operating Officer, Stephen Tracy, said: "Dementia profoundly impacts not only those diagnosed, but their loved ones as well. What really stood out to me is that our study reveals that one in three people are unfamiliar with the condition and its symptoms. Moreover, only 20% feel prepared to support a loved one if they were to develop symptoms. This underscores the vital role of organisations like Dementia Singapore in educating the public and offering crucial support."

## **Struggles of Dementia Caregivers**

The study reveals that caregivers' biggest hurdles are centred around the emotional and mental strains of caregiving. It found that the top five difficulties faced by caregivers are:

- Managing behavioural changes exhibited by individuals with dementia (70%)
- Navigating emotional stress and burnout (67%)
- Coping with the disease's progression and the gradual decline of their loved ones' abilities (57%)
- Balancing the demanding responsibilities of caregiving with personal and professional commitments (57%)
- Dealing with resistance to care and communication difficulties (55%)

## Demand for Support

Interestingly, while financial burden did not top the list of challenges, 66% of caregivers expressed a strong belief that increased financial support would significantly alleviate the strain they and their families experience. Moreover, the study uncovers a shared desire among caregivers for more specialised programmes catering to individuals with dementia, such as the creation of day care centres and home personal care. Here is the list of the top five types of support that caregivers hoped to get:

- Financial schemes for caregivers to reduce financial burden (66%)
- More programmes for persons with dementia i.e., dementia day care centres, home personal care, etc (56%)
- Extra help from another caregiver (52%)
- Training on how to support/care for PLWDs (50%)
- Mental health support for myself as a caregiver (50%)

Said Jason Foo, Chief Executive Officer of Dementia Singapore: “We cannot underestimate the stressful effects of having to care for a person with dementia. Many caregivers have shared how they had experienced a sense of crippling anxiety upon learning of the diagnosis. The uncertainty coupled with the need to make drastic adjustments to their work plans and lifestyle is daunting to say the least. Left unchecked, depression can quickly set in if they do not receive proper care and support.

“To address this, we have support groups that allow caregivers to draw strength from each other and learn different ways to cope with the changing demands. More importantly, they would realise that they are not alone in their care journey. In 2021, we launched a mobile application, CARA, which allows caregivers to leverage the collective efforts of the community. We’ve also partnered with the Municipal Services Office (MSO) to expand the reach of the app’s key services; reports of missing persons with dementia filed via the CARA app are now broadcasted on the MSO OneService app, which greatly increases the chances of them being found.”

## Self-Care Disparities

Despite the immense stress they endure daily, caregivers demonstrate slightly lower rates of engagement in self-care practices compared to the Singapore general population. The study reveals that caregivers tend to rely more on relaxation techniques and social support from peer groups to cope with their emotional burdens. However, they struggle to prioritise adequate rest for their own well-being.

What are the self-care strategies/activities that you do/participate in?	Overall	Primary/Secondary/Ad-Hoc Caregivers
Prioritising adequate sleep and rest	53%	42%
Practising relaxation techniques such as meditation or deep breathing exercises	29%	37%
Seeking social support through support groups or online communities	10%	17%

The study's findings emphasise the critical role of convenient and dependable support mechanisms for caregivers, such as easily accessible respite programmes that would enable them to care for their loved ones while engaging in self-care activities—a sentiment echoed by 56% of respondents. Additionally, financial assistance schemes for services dedicated to caring for their loved ones, mentioned by 55% of caregivers, hold the potential to alleviate their concerns and serve as a catalyst for increased engagement in self-care practices.

The study was released at a Dementia Singapore event at Golden Village, VivoCity, to mark World Alzheimer's Day. The event also featured a private screening of *"Lady!"*, an award-winning local documentary which follows the journey of Siti as she cares for her husband who has young-onset dementia; and the return of Dementia Singapore's #ShineForDementia initiative, which saw seven iconic landmarks and shopping malls across Singapore light up in purple and yellow as a show of solidarity for the dementia community.

You can access the results of the full survey [here](#).

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**About Milieu Insight**

Milieu Insight is Southeast Asia's leading consumer research and data analytics company, renowned for its expertise in providing brands and businesses with valuable insights and market research data. Operating in Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, Philippines and Vietnam, Milieu Insight's industry-transforming solutions were awarded several prestigious awards, including Campaign Asia's Market Research Agency of the Year (Gold) and Tech MVP 2022. Its one-stop insights platform, Canvas, offers tools for analysing and visualising consumer opinion data across a multitude of lifestyle topics and sectors, powering businesses to make better, more impactful decisions and strategies. For more information about Milieu Insight visit:

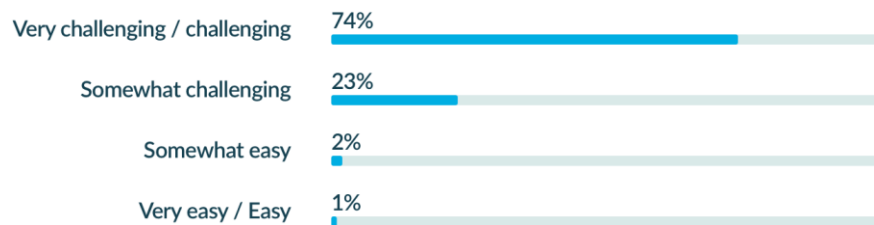
[www.mili.eu](http://www.mili.eu)

**About Dementia Singapore**

Dementia Singapore was formed in 1990 as Alzheimer's Disease Association to better serve Singapore's growing dementia community, increase awareness about dementia, and reduce the stigma surrounding the condition. As Singapore's leading Social Service Agency in specialised dementia care, Dementia Singapore aims to advocate for the needs of people living with dementia and their families; and empower the community through capability-building, knowledge, and consultancy; as well as deliver quality person-centred care innovations. For more information, visit [www.dementia.org.sg](http://www.dementia.org.sg).

## Survey Highlights

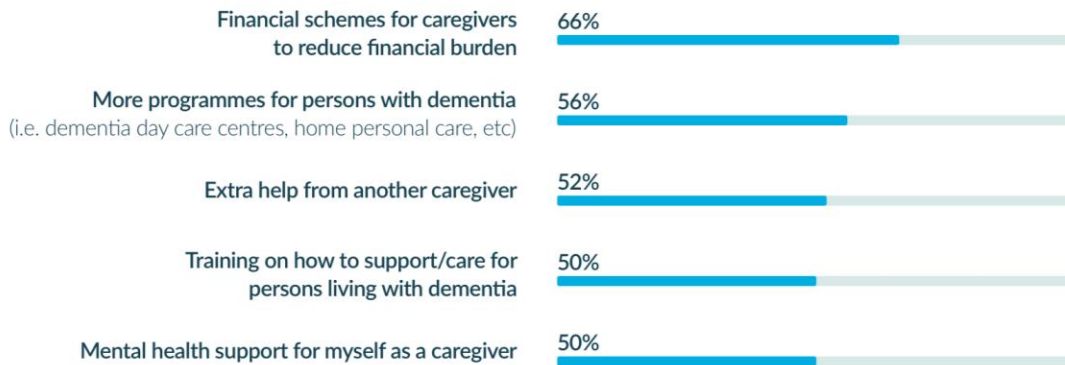
### 1. How would you describe the experience of providing care for the family member with dementia?



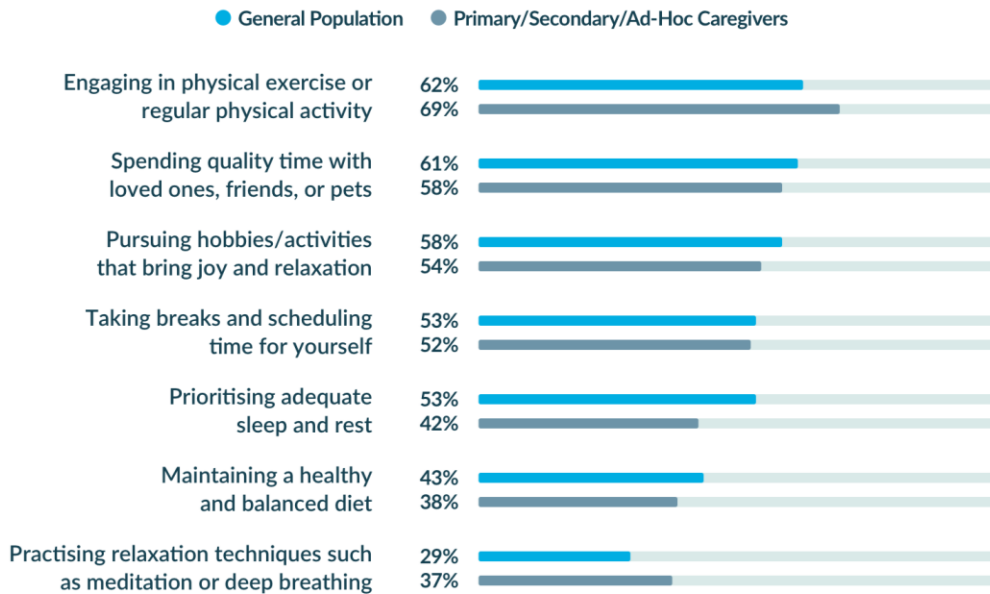
### 2. In your opinion, what are some common challenges faced by caregivers of persons living with dementia?



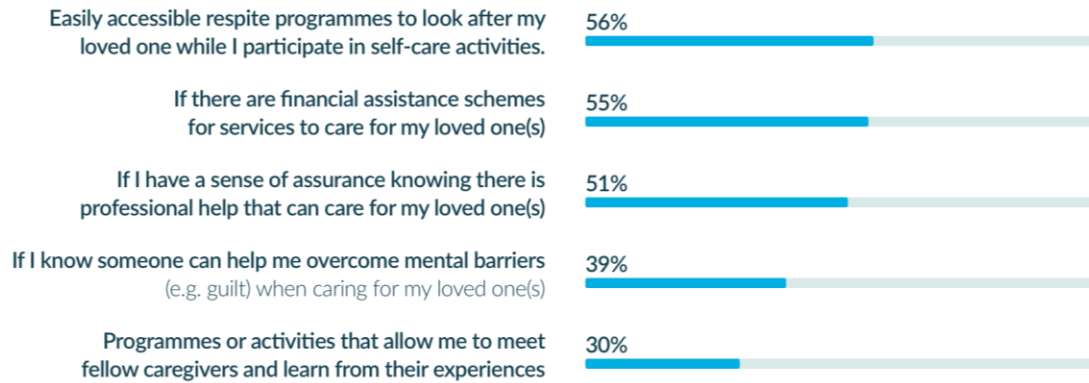
### 3. What kind(s) of support would you like to have to help you with your caregiving duties for the family member with dementia?



### 4. What are the self-care strategies/activities that you do/participate in?



## 5. What will motivate you to increase your participation/ start participating in self-care activities?



This quantitative study was conducted via Milieu Insight's proprietary survey community with N=1,500 respondents in Singapore. The data is representative of the Singapore adult population aged 16 and above. Fieldwork was conducted from 6-21 July 2023

