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# Caregiver perspectives of experiencing the opportunity to 'have a break'

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# Caregiver perspectives of experiencing the opportunity to 'have a break'

## **Abstract**

Abstract of a paper presentation.

## **Disciplines**

Medicine and Health Sciences | Social and Behavioral Sciences

## **Publication Details**

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## **Authors**

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## ACMHN Abstract 2015

**Title:** Caregiver perspectives of experiencing the opportunity to 'have a break'.

**Authors:** 1. Brighton, R, 2. Moxham, L, 3. Pegg, S, 4. Taylor, E., 5. Patterson, C, 6. Sumskis, S, 7. Perlman, D.

**Background:** The '*Recovery Camp*' is a 5-day therapeutic recreation camp for 30 people experiencing mental illness run in May 2015. Carers of persons with mental illness engage in many caregiving tasks and spend considerable time on these activities. This caregiving is of immense social and economic value, but often at a high cost to carers (Pakenham 2012), including limited time for leisure activities (Moller-Leimkuhler & Wiesheu 2012). Leisure time, conceptualised as 'non-working time' (Blank et al. 2015), is important for the promotion of physiological and psychological health and wellbeing (Ravenscroft & Gilchrist 2009). In order to explore how the carers of camp participants spent their free time whilst their loved ones were away, the carers were offered the opportunity to complete a survey that centred on their experiences.

**Methods:** A total of 21 carers completed the 10-question survey. The questions centred on their caregiving background and ways in which they spent their leisure time whilst their loved ones were at 'Recovery Camp'. The results from this survey will form the basis of this presentation.

**Conclusion:** Caregivers play an important role in the lives of community-dwelling people with mental illness. However, providing care is associated with a wide-range of adverse impacts on the caregiver's lifestyle and health. It is therefore important to explore the effects of caregiving and highlight clinician-led approaches that may help carers increase their leisure time and thus improve their health and wellbeing.

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