

Singapore reveals real cost of being critically ill

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A new Manulife study on critical illness found that close to 40% of respondents have spent all or most of their savings battling illness. Furthermore, Singaporeans who become seriously ill do not just struggle with their disease and medical bills, they often feel like a burden to their friends and family (76%), experience emotional and psychological distress (72%) and face the fear of abandonment (58%).

These are among the key findings of the survey that polled 500 critically ill patients and caregivers to gain an insight into the reality of being sick in Singapore. The survey is unique in that it focuses on respondents, all of whom either have a serious illness or are caring for a sick friend or family member. This helps shed light into the real experiences, challenges and fears that they face.

According to the study - 1 in 4 caregivers depleted most or all of their savings on health care needs. 1 in 3 sought cheaper medical care alternatives, and 1 in 10 could not afford to pay for basic necessities. 14% among those surveyed worried about having to quit or change their jobs to cope with caring for a critically ill friend or family member.

9 in 10 caregivers admitted that their family or loved one diagnosed with critical illness is a burden that put a strain on their financial situation. 71% of caregivers surveyed felt emotional pressures and ended up developing stress-related diseases and conditions.