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Editorial

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Respite Care

An Essential Yet Unmet Need for Families With Children With Special Health Care Needs

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The timely article by Savithri Nageswaran¹ describes a major unmet need: respite care. Using the 2001 National Survey of Children With Special Health Care Needs, Nageswaran reports that 8.8% of respondents designated a need for respite care. That need was higher in households of a minority race/ethnicity and those with younger children, low maternal education, and low income. It was also higher in people without insurance or with insurance gaps and those with public compared with private insurance. According to the article, the need for respite care increased with functional limitation and unstable health conditions. Twenty-four percent of the caregivers who needed respite care reported that their need was unmet.

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