The experience of couples when one partner has a stroke at a young age: an interpretative phenomenological analysis

Stroke is a major cause of disability worldwide and affects a significant number of working age adults each year. The consequences of stroke impact upon both young stroke survivors and their partners and this study aimed to qualitatively explore their joint experience. This was achieved through eight joint semi-structured interviews which were analysed using IPA and resulted in seven themes, three of which are presented here: 1) “How’s this happened?” - Making sense of the stroke; 2) “Is this what life is going to be like now?” - From partners to carer and ‘cared for’; 3) “I lost being a man. I was a little boy, being looked after all the time” - From partners to parent and child. These findings are considered in relation to the existing literature and clinical implications for stroke survivors and their partners are discussed.