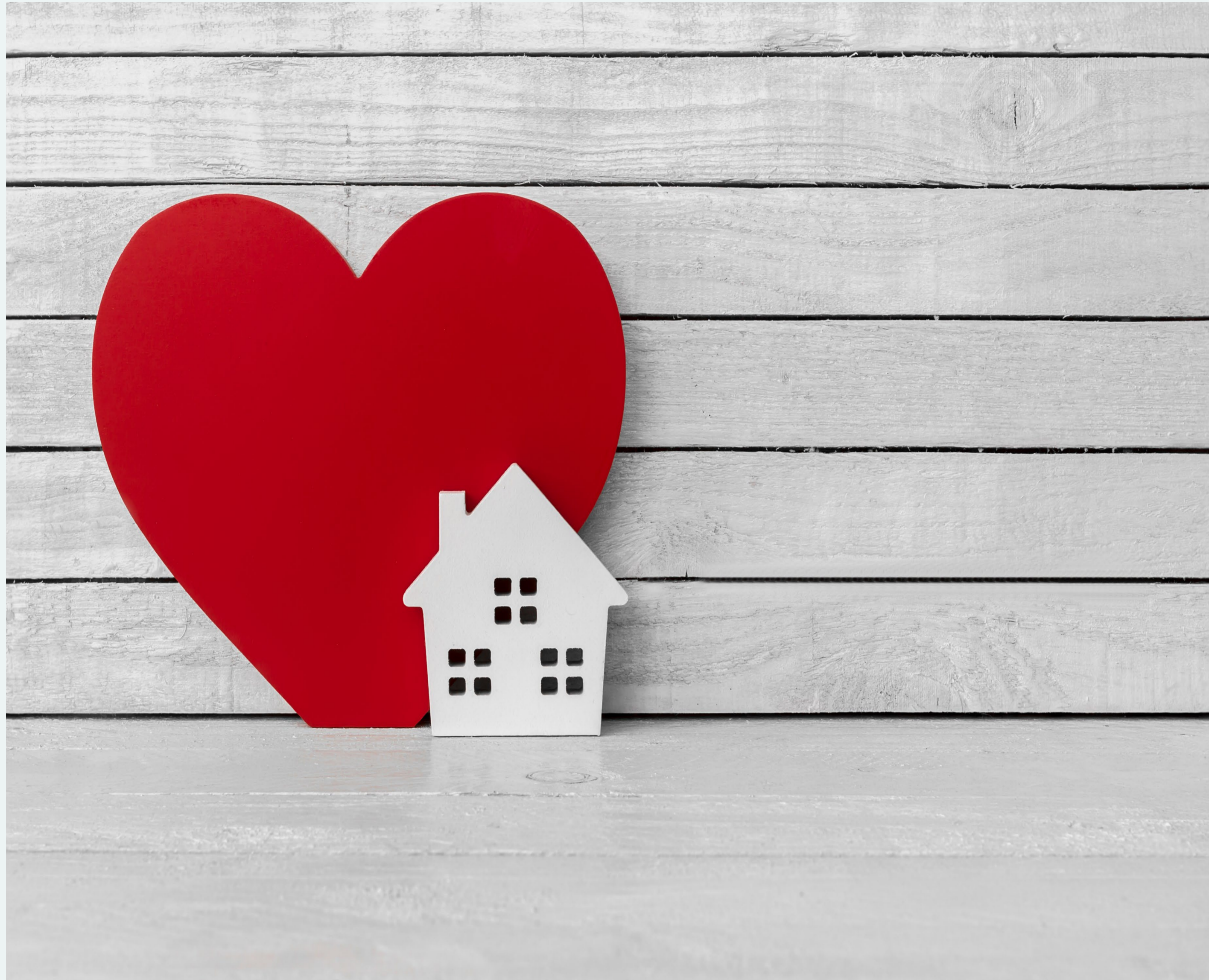


Emergency Care at Home: Patients' and Relatives'

Perceptions and Experiences of Mobile Emergency Teams

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Introduction

Healthcare systems are under increasing pressure due to ageing populations and increasingly complex care needs. Emergency departments face overcrowding and fragmented care, prompting a shift toward delivering emergency care in patients' homes through models such as Mobile Emergency Teams (METs). While home-based emergency care may offer familiarity, emotional safety, and dignity, little is known about how patients and relatives perceive and experience this form of care.

Aim: To explore patients' and relatives' perceptions and experiences of emergency care delivered at home by METs.

Method

A qualitative inductive design was employed. Twenty semi-structured interviews were conducted with patients' and relatives' who had received emergency care at home from METs in southwestern Sweden. The interviews were audio-recorded and analyzed using thematic analysis. Ethical approval was obtained.

Key Findings

👉 Calm and Caring Support

Home-based emergency care was perceived as calm and reassuring, contributing to emotional comfort for patients and relatives.

👉 Safety and Dignity at Home

Familiar home environments fostered a sense of safety, dignity, and participation in care.

👉 Continuity Matters

The importance of structured follow-up and continuity of care beyond the acute visit was strongly emphasized.

Result

Patients' and Relatives' Perceptions and Experiences of Emergency Care at Home delivered by METs

Being embraced by a calming environment

Struggling with the decision to seek help

Experiencing calm and structured care

A sense of safety and security at home

Staying in a familiar environment

Feeling involved in the care encounter

Figure 1 Main theme and associated subthemes illustrating patients' and relatives' perceptions and experiences of emergency care delivered at home by Mobile Emergency Teams..

Conclusion

Patients and relatives valued the MET service and felt reassured by the opportunity to remain at home instead of attending the emergency department. However, the follow-up process was perceived as unclear and warrants further improvement.



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