Premature mortality among elderly in Malaysia: 2009 - 2013

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Substantial advances on the life expectancy have been achieved in Malaysia over the past few decades. However, it is essential that these elderly lead a healthier old age which leans towards successful aging. Mortality is the most basic health information to understand the health status among the elderly. We aim to describe the major causes of premature mortality among the elderly population in Malaysia from 2009 to 2013. **Methods:** The calculation of premature mortality in terms of Years of Life Lost (YLL) was based on the method used in Global Burden of Disease (GBD) study. YLL is the mortality component determined by the age-sex specific number of deaths and life expectancy at death. Mortality data were obtained from the Department of Statistics Malaysia. Elderly in this study was defined as adults aged 60 years and above. **Results:** There is an increasing trend of premature mortality among elderly in Malaysia from 2009 (877,814) to 2013 (1,020,633), which is a 16.3% increment in 5 years. The increasing trend is observed for both genders. For males, the top four causes of premature mortality are cardiovascular and circulatory disease (45.3%), malignant neoplasms (17.3%), respiratory infections (7.9%) and diabetes mellitus (6.3%). A similar pattern was observed in females at 43.8%, 18.1%, 10.1% and 8.8% respectively. The fifth cause is unintentional injuries (5.4%) for males and genito-urinary diseases (4.9%) for females. **Discussion:** Understanding premature mortality is important in drawing up preventive measures and improving the health status. As expected, non-communicable diseases (NCD) contributed to the most premature mortality among the elderly in Malaysia. Reducing the risk factors for NCDs should be given a priority in planning health services for the elderly.

Prematurity and child developmental delay: finding from National Health and Morbidity Survey (NHMS) 2016

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Premature infants are at risk of developmental delay such as speech, gross and fine motor. This study aims to determine the relationship between prematurity and developmental delay among children aged 6-59 months old in Malaysia. **Methods:** Data from developmental assessment module from NHMS 2016 was analysed. This is a nationwide population-based study; using 2 stages stratified random sampling design. The target population were children of mothers aged 15-49 years old with last childbirth less than 2 years prior to the survey included children below 5 years. Children who were born before completed 37 weeks of gestations were categorized as premature. For childhood developmental assessment, the trained nurses assessed the developmental status of children based on the modified Denver guideline. Developmental delay was defined as delay in any of four domains: gross motor, fine motor, social skills and speech based on the child's age. **Results:** The prevalence of prematurity was 6.6% (95%CI: 5.79-7.46) with 5.7% (95%CI: 3.36-9.38) of them had developmental delay. The prevalence of developmental delay among children aged 6-59 months was 3.3% (95%CI: 2.58-4.19) which was higher in speech 1.7% (95%CI: 1.22-2.44) followed by social skills 1.2% (95%CI: 0.85-1.57), fine motor 0.7% (95%CI: 0.52-1.01) and gross motor 0.6% (95%CI: 0.41-0.87). The prevalence was higher in boys compared to girls and among younger age children. Logistic regression analysis showed that children who were born premature were more at-risk of developmental delay (adjusted Odds ratio: 1.54, CI: 1.15-2.05) when controlling for other factors. **Conclusion:** Developmental delay in early childhood is closely related to gestational age at birth. Early detection and intervention can improve neurodevelopmental outcomes and maximize the child's abilities particularly among premature baby.