Non-Communicable Diseases and Major Risk Factors Among Elderly in Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

Globally, there are an estimated 962 million people aged 60 years and above in 2017 and this population is rapidly increased more than twice from the last two decades. Malaysia is also expected to experience an aging population by 2020. Since the burden of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) continues to rise, coupled with a rapidly ageing population, it is important to assess the NCD status of the elderly. Thus, the National Health and Morbidity Survey (NHMS) was conducted in 2018 with the aim of assessing the prevalence of health status and health related issue amongst Malaysian elderly. The study consisted of several modules, including the NCDs and major NCDs risk factors such as diabetes, hypertension, hypercholesterolemia, tobacco, physical activity and obesity. According to the NHMS, the prevalence of self-reported diabetic, hypertension and hypercholesterolemia among the elderly were 27.7%, 51.1% and 41.8% respectively. Majority of them received the drug treatment in the past two weeks and most of them sought the treatment from government facilities. Less than 0.5% of them did not seek any treatment. Meanwhile, the prevalence of NCDs risk factors such as current smokers, physical inactive and obesity were 13.3%, 29.8%, 17.6% respectively. In conclusion, the prevalence of NCDs remains high amongst the elderly and the co-existence of multiple lifestyle NCD risk factors among them is a public health concern. Therefore, comprehensive health-promotion interventions and providing quality care particularly at the primary care level is important to maintain the quality of life and reduce the risks of complications.

Prevalence of Food Insecurity and Malnutrition; Factors Related to Malnutrition in The Elderly

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ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION: Malnutrition is an important cause of mortality and morbidity in the elderly. The objectives of this survey were to determine the malnutrition and food insecurity prevalence among the elderly in Malaysia and to determine its risk factors. METHODS: Data from a cross sectional survey derived from National Health and Morbidity Survey in 2018 was used. A stratified cluster sampling design involving a total of 3977 elderly aged 60 years and above. (51.1% females; 57.6% Malays, 26.5% Chinese, 6.5% Indian and 9.4% others). A face to face interview using mobile device was used during data collection. Malnutrition was determined using the Mini Nutritional Assessment (MNA) tool. Food security was defined according to low (score 2-4) and very low food secure (score 5-6) based on the USDA Short Form Food Security Survey Module. Data was analysed using SPSS version 23. Descriptive and multiple logistic regression model were used in the analysis. RESULTS: The prevalence of food insecurity was 10.4%, and 30.8% were malnourished. The following factors were found to significantly increase the risk of malnutrition; rural strata (aOR 1.36, 95%CI: 1.06, 1.75), being single (aOR 1.47, 95%CI: 1.22, 1.77), no formal education level (aOR 2.13, 95%CI: 1.34, 3.41), low social support (aOR 2.02, 95%CI:1.55, 2.62) and presence of food insecurity (aOR 2.01 95%CI; 1.60, 2.52). CONCLUSION: A third of the Malaysian elderly was malnourished and associated with food insecurity and low socioeconomic status, being single and residing in rural areas. There is a need to promptly identify those at high risk and review the current strategy to effectively address malnutrition and food insecurity in the country.

KEYWORDS: Malnutrition, Food insecurity, Elderly, National Health and Morbidity Survey, Malaysia