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ABSTRACT 117

Early Dementia Questionnaire: A New Screening Instrument For Early Dementia In Primary Care Practice.

Zurraini A1, Aziz NA2, Aznida FAA2, Rosdinom R3, Sharifa Ezat WP4

1Department of Family Medicine, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, Kuching, Malaysia.

2Department of Family Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

3Department of Psychiatry, Faculty of Medicine, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

4Department of Community Health, Faculty of Medicine, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

Main author:

Dr Zurraini Arabi

MBBS (UM), MMed (FamMed) (UKM)

Department of Family Medicine, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak.

Co-authors:

Assoc Prof Dr Noor Azah Aziz

MD (MAL) MMed (FamMed) (MAL) MPhil (UK) Fellow in Stroke Rehab (UK)

Department of Family Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.

Dr Aznida Firzah Abdul Aziz

MBBS (UM) MMed (Fam Med) (UKM), Department of Family Medicine,

Faculty of Medicine, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.

Assoc Prof Dr Rosdinom Razali

MD (UKM), MMed (Psych) (UKM), Department of Psychiatry, Faculty of Medicine,

Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

Assoc Prof Dr Sharifa Ezat Wan Puteh

MD (UKM), MPH (Hospital and Health Management) (UKM), PhD (Health Economics),

Department of Community Health, Faculty of Medicine, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.

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Background: Worldwide, the number of ageing population is increasing with associated increase in dementia prevalence. Forgetfulness in elderly people is commonly perceived as normal by some local culture. Thus, recognizing elderly patients presenting in primary care with symptoms other than memory complaints are important in detecting dementia early.

Objectives: This study was conducted to screen elderly patients for early dementia in primary care using a newly developed Early Dementia Questionnaire (EDQ) and comparing it with a standard assessment tool, the Mini Mental State Examination (MMSE).



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Methodology: A cross sectional study was conducted on a group of elderly patients attending a primary health centre, using a universal sampling method. Elderly depression was excluded using Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS). Exclusion criteria include known cases of dementia.

Inclusion criteria were a score of 5 or less in GDS and presence of a reliable informant. A face to face interview was done using EDQ with the patient and informant to elicit symptoms of early dementia or a telephone interview if the informant was not present with the patient. The patient was then assessed with MMSE.

Results: Prevalence of dementia among 155 subjects was 52.3% by EDQ and 15.5% by MMSE. The EDQ demonstrated a sensitivity of 79.2% with specificity of 52.7%. Positive predictive value of EDQ was 23.5% with the negative predictive value of 93.2%. The strongest predictor of possible early dementia was complaints of memory problems (OR 26.22; 95% CI 2.03-338.14) followed by concentration problems (OR 14.33; 95% CI 5.53- 37.12), emotional problems (OR 4.75; 95% CI 1.64-13.81) and sleep disturbances (OR 3.14; 95% CI 1.15-8.56).

Conclusions: EDQ can be viewed as a promising alternative to MMSE for screening of early dementia in primary care.