



1st World Congress on Healthy Ageing, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Abstract 58

Title: Predictors of institutionalization among dementia patients in Malaysia

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Abstract keywords: Institutionalization, Dementia, Malaysia

ABSTRACT

Background: Care management is prioritized in the absence of treatment and medication to cure dementia. In Malaysia, caring for the elderly is a responsibility and a cultural/religious obligation of the children. Nonetheless transition to nursing home is often an option either due to disease progression, modernization or changes in cultural values.

Objective: This study examined the predictors for institutionalization among dementia patients in Malaysia.

Design: A quasi experimental study design involving dementia patients from government hospitals (home care) and nursing homes was used. A total number of 221 dementia patients aged 60 and above were interviewed. Consenting respondents were assessed on cognitive severity, depression, activity of daily living and social isolation/connectedness by using Short Mini Mental State Examination (SMMSE), Geriatric Depression Scale – 15 items (GDS-15), Cornell Scale for Depression (CSDD), Barthel Index (BI) and Friendship Scale (FS) respectively.

Result: There were significant differences in institutionalization by ethnicity, marital status, availability of caregiver, relationship satisfaction with children, financial status, depression, social connectedness ($p < 0.01$) and cognitive impairment. No differences were found in other socio-demographic factors and physical functions between the study cohorts. Multivariate analysis yielded that ethnicity, availability of caregiver, financial status and social connectedness/isolation were the significant predictors of institutionalization among dementia patients in Malaysia.

Conclusion: The availability of a caregiver was the key predictor for the transition of dementia patients to nursing home. However, other factors such as financial status and ethnicity also played a role in determining the institutionalization of dementia patients.