



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

Title: Promoting Healthy Ageing in Depressed Elderly Patients.

Back Ground: The general concept of ageing is a frail body with multiple co-morbidities including high blood pressure, poor energy, chronic illnesses, poor motivation and depression. Health care professionals need to change this old concept into a positive perception towards healthy ageing. The general picture of such an individual is a highly motivated individual with an energetic body, sharp mind and joyful living. Such individuals see ageing as an inevitable but positive phase in their lives. One of the aspects that needs attention is mental health. Depression in the elderly is very common but mostly overlooked. Recognizing and treating depression is essential for healthy ageing as it may change the entire picture from a gloomy existence to a meaningful life.

Objectives: The purpose of this paper is to increase the awareness of clinicians for early recognition and treatment of depression in the elderly. Treatment in a compassionate environment prepares the mind and body for healthy ageing. This will include management of depression, giving a meaning to their existence, maintaining dignity and promoting meaningful connections for a healthy and vibrant life.

Methods: Clinical evaluation/diagnosis by history, The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders criteria and symptoms assessment scale. Management with medication, counseling and self-help strategies to cope better with body image changes, losses, financial stressors, and chronic illnesses.

Results: Successful management of mental health issues in the elderly not only brings joy and meaning in their life but also reduces the stress in caregivers.

Conclusions: Early recognition of symptoms of depression, providing psychological support, meditation, and coping strategies along with necessary life style changes has shown an improvement in emotional and physical health. It has led the elderly to find a meaning in life again, and develop a positive image towards ageing.