Psychiatric and Physical Morbidity in Old age Homes in India.

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Abstract

Background:
An exceptional increase in the number and proportion of “older adults” in the world, rapid increase in nuclear families and contemporary changes in the psychosocial matrix and values often compel the elderly segment of the society to live alone or in old age homes. These and other factors make the older adults increasing vulnerable to mental health problems and their undesirable side effects.
Objectives: This study assesses the sociodemographic factors, physical illnesses, psychiatric morbidity of inmates residing in old age home.
Methods:
It is an exploratory study in which information about twelve available old age homes at Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh, India were obtained after taking the permission to carry out the study, clinical interviews were carried out, mini mental status examination and activities of daily living were used where required.
Results:
More than half of the inhabitants of old age homes were suffering from one or other mental problems, depression being the most common one. The inhabitants suffering from psychiatric illnesses had one or more associated physical morbidity.
Conclusion:
The present study is the first of its nature conducted in India to find out psychiatric and physical morbidity in the inhabitants of old age homes, findings reveals higher prevalence of psychiatric and physical morbidity. This study highlights the need for more studies to improve the mental and physical health care among this growing set of population. Nuclear family appears to be risk factor for depression.
Keywords: Old age homes, elderly, psychiatric, mental, morbidity, physical illness.

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