

Pain Management in Geriatric Patients, the Role of Nursing Staff

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Introduction and aim: Pain is an unpleasant sensory and emotional experience associated with an actual or potential tissue injury or described as such. Pain is a very prevalent and clinically significant problem in the elderly. For the assessment and management of pain in geriatric patients we encounter many difficulties due to physiological and biological changes brought about by age, concomitant diseases and the medications them use. The main purpose of this study is the treatment and management of pain in this age group which is a growing concern for elderly patients and healthcare staff.

Method: Data for this study were collected using questionnaires completed by geriatric ages and self-reported and documented information by the nursing staff in these centers. The study was conducted in geriatric centers and nursing homes in Albania in the period January - April 2021.

Results: 230 (n = 230) persons of geriatric age participated in this study. 65% of this age group were male and 35% were female aged 65 and over. The results show that 75% of these geriatric patients had acute and chronic pain which affects the quality of daily life. Over 45% of older adults report having distressing pain and 65% of them report having pain in more than one place. The results showed that only 5% of this age group could manage their pain and the rest relied on pain management in medical devices and the assistance provided by the nursing and medical staff of asylums and geriatric centers.

Conclusions: From the data of the study we conclude that pain affects the elderly in the performance of daily activities and tasks. Pain was associated with decreased physical function, depression, isolation, and decreased quality of life for this age group. All possible options for optimal pain management in this age group are recommended, such as: pharmacotherapy, psychological support, physical rehabilitation, and intervention procedures. Pain management tools vary in geriatric patients and it is recommended that these differences be taken into account in the interventions performed by the nursing staff. It is imperative that nursing staff who provide pain care services be trained and trained to provide care in this very specific and very complex area, especially in this age group who require ongoing care.

Biography

Zamira Imeraj is a Lecturer at the University of Medicine Tirana Albania. She has a doctorate in nursing sciences. She is the author of lecture series for nursing students and has published articles in journals and conferences on nursing care.