

Abstract

Objective: With increasing age, physical dysfunction has increased, which has led to various problems in the elderly, and at this time, the mental health of the elderly is as important as at any other time in life. The mental health of the elderly and the patterns of providing services to this group are one of the most important concerns of organizations providing community health services, and addressing them requires understanding the biological, psychological, and social dimensions of the aging process. This study aimed to explain the challenges of the elderly in receiving mental health services from comprehensive health centers in Kerman and to provide solutions.

Materials and Methods: This qualitative study was conducted in a phenomenological manner and semi-structured interviews were used to collect information. The sampling method among the elderly and experts was purposive and snowball and continued until saturation. The data were analyzed using the seven-step analytical method in Claise's qualitative data analysis. In the next step, an expert panel was formed to examine the experiences of the participants and provide suggestions.

Findings: The present study expressed the experiences of 8 elderly people who used the services of comprehensive centers and 28 experts (physicians, psychologists, and health care providers). The text of the interviews was analyzed and conceptual codes were extracted from it. Then, the codes were categorized into relevant concepts, which in the elderly group were: "Reasons for elderly people to visit health centers, experience of receiving services from comprehensive health centers, necessary expectations from comprehensive health centers, and problems existing during service provision" and experts: "Sedation of elderly people and involvement in muscle diseases and blood pressure, and challenges in providing services."

Conclusion: The role of comprehensive urban health service centers in advancing community health goals and improving community health conditions is key, but is sometimes neglected and uncared for. For the development of urban health, there is no other way but to pay more attention to these centers. The results of this study can be used in policy-making to provide better services to the elderly in comprehensive mental health centers.

Keywords: Experiences, elderly people, comprehensive health centers, providers, qualitative study



Kerman University of Medical Sciences
School of Medical management and information
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Health and medical
services management

Title:

Identifying the Challenges of Elderly in Receiving Mental Health Services from Comprehensive
Health Centers in Kerman

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Dissertation number:

Year:2024