

Abstract

The objectives of this descriptive research were to examine the situation of mental health problems, the elderly mental health promotion need focusing on family and community participation in the southern-Isan region. A sample consisted of 400 elderly in Ubon Ratchathani, Sisaket, Yasothon and Amnat Charoen province. A package of questionnaires interviewing included personal data, physical health status, mental health status, stress test, the screening test for depression, mental health promotion need, and MMSE-Thai 2002. Data were analyzed by descriptive statistics include frequency, percentage, range, mean, and standard deviation. Content analysis was used to analyze the elderly mental health promotion need focusing on family and community participation. The results found that

1. The majority of elderly had normal mental health state (75.00 %). There were 25.0 % of the elderly had mental health problems.

2. The screening tool for depression with two-questions (2Q) found that most of the elderly (85.25%) were negative result, which showed that they were no risk of depression. There were 14.75% (n=59) of the elderly had positive screening results. The nine-questions (9Q) for depression found that there were 22 elderly with depressive disorders. The level of depression was mild depression (4.8%, n=19), moderate depression (0.6%, n=2), and severe depression (0.3%, n=1). The eight-questions (8Q) for suicidal minds assessment found that there were 17 elderly who had no present suicidal minds. There were 5 elderly who were mild suicidal idea.

3. The elderly who had no education showed the rate of dementia (32.00%) more than the elderly who had an elementary school (19.62%) and high school (6.78%). For the age group, the old old (more than 80 years old) showed the rate of dementia (51.22%) more than the middle age old (70-79 years old) (17.5 %) and the young old (60-69 years old) (12.56 %).

4. It was found the 5 aspects of the elderly mental health promotion need included physical, psychological/emotional, cognitive, social, and spiritual aspects, such as the requirement to make merits (Mean = 4.05, SD = .91) prayer (Mean = 3.97, SD = .95) offer food to monk (Mean = 3.96, SD = 1.01) group meeting (Mean = 3.94, SD = .93) health services (Mean = 3.93, SD = .93), get the respect from community member and receive family's member care. Moreover, 74 percent of elderly needs of families and community participation together in various activities, including exercise, merits, family activity such as traveling, new year's day, Songkran festival, and the recreation / relaxation activities respectively.

5. There are 9 ways to promote the elderly mental health need focusing on family and community participation: 1) encouraging family members participate activities together; 2) promoting family together in the important day of the family and the festivals, or special days; 3) promoting family members to help and care for elderly; 4) encouraging to participate activities or meeting with friends; 5) promoting participation with the community members; 6) supporting wisdom transmission from the elderly to children; 7) promoting the religious activities; 8) promoting appropriate health behavior, such as exercise, appropriate food consumption, stress management, etc.; and 9) promoting activities to increase extra income for the elderly.

The results from this study recommended that health care providers and health care institutes should develop programs and conduct research to promote the elderly mental health need involve 5 aspects of the elderly mental health need included physical, psychological/emotional, cognitive, social, and spiritual aspects. Moreover, the involving organization can provide outreach mental health services to promote mental health care for the elderly.

Keywords: the situation of mental health problems, the elderly mental health promotion need, family and community participation, the elderly in southern-Isan region