

Thesis Title The Effectiveness of Health Education Program on
Dementia of The Institutionalized Elders at Bangkae
Home

Name Juntima Yensukjai

Degree Master of science (Public Health)
major in Health Education

Thesis Supervisory Committee

Naiphinich Kotchabhakdi, B.Sc.(Med.Sc.), Ph.D.

Anan Srikiatkachorn, B.Sc.(Med.Sc.), M.D.

Roogrote Poomriew, M.P.H., Ph.D

Chanuantong Tanasukarn, B.Ed., M.P.H., Dr.P.H.

Date of Graduation 11 April B.E. 2537 (1994)

ABSTRACT

The improvements of socio-economic status, living conditions, disease prevention and health service have resulted in a longer life-span among Thai people. As the number of the Thai elderly population increases, it becomes necessary to maintain a decent quality of life for these elderly people. Dementia wrongly considered as a normal consequence of aging, is one of the commonly found diseases in elderly populations. The incidence of dementia has been found to be age dependent. This disease degrades the quality of life and also causes stress in both the elderly and in those around them.

The aim of this work is to study the effectiveness of a health education programme which reduces social isolation, loneliness, anxiety, depression, stress and meeting with a group of elderly against the development of dementia among the elderly. The health education programme is based on the social support theory and self-help group principle. There are 112 elderly subjects from the Institutionalized Elderly at Bangkhae home. They are equally divided into 2 groups. The experimental group is put into the health education programme twice a month for three months by this researcher followed by once a month for three months by staff from the Police Hospital. The control group is treated normally, receiving no such health education.

Data were collected both before and after the experiment during a three-month period by means of interviewing and the administration of the Depression test and the Thai Mini-Mental State Examination (MMSE). The results suggested that the symptoms of dementia and stress levels in the experimental group were significantly reduced (Paired Sample t-test) and significantly less than the control group (Student's t-test). The data shows relationship between education, age and dementia but there were no relationships between gender and the development of dementia.

This study shows that the health education programme, based on the social support theory and the self-help group principle, can improve dementia symptoms and reduce stress levels in the elderly. It would be beneficial to the elderly, in general, if this health education programme were to be applied more broadly, both to other institutionalized elderly groups, as well as others.