

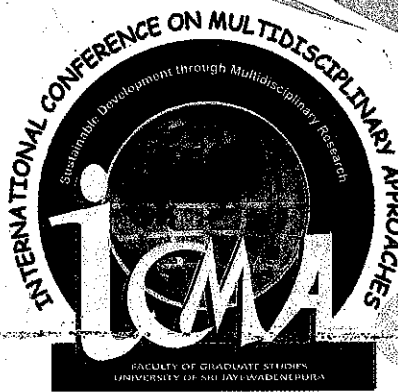
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# IDENTIFYING CHARACTERISTICS OF ELDERLY PATIENTS THROUGH A SCREENING TOOL FOR POST DISCHARGE PLAN AND FOLLOW-UP CARE (PDP&FC): A PILOT STUDY

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Post Discharge Plan and Follow-up Care (PDP&FC) are recognized practices in most developed countries. However, this practice is not available in Sri Lanka. Main objective of this study is to assess the characteristics of elderly patients through a screening tool for Post Discharge Plan and Follow-up Care (PDP&FC). A literature review was done to obtain research tools/instruments published on elderly patients, their characteristics and health seeking behavior. A screening tool was developed by reviewing the main characteristics which are to be useful in Sri Lankan context. Ethical approval was obtained from the Ethics Review Committee of Colombo South Teaching Hospital (CSTH). For the pilot study, a convenient sample of 12 participants was selected from CSTH. The sample represents all categories of patients those who admitted during the month of June 2017. The sample consisted of elderly patients (age range; 60-88 years, male/female; 1:1) who were having co-morbid conditions and on multiple medications. Most of them (10, 83.33%) follow government hospital clinics. Majority of patients, who live with either their spouse or children (7, 58.33%) or with children (4, 33.33%), and did not have a particular direct source of income (5, 41.66%). Perception of their 'family role' was also low. The highest education level was up to grade ten (7, 58.33%) and most of them were not employed (7, 58.33%). The major type of admission was 'emergency' (unplanned) with sudden onset of symptoms (10, 83.33%). However, frequency of hospital admissions during previous six months was low (5, 41.66%). With regard to their physical activities, most of them (8, 66.66%) need some kind of assistance to maintain their activities of daily living. Awareness and utilizing available social support systems were in moderate level. Almost all were remarkably involved in spiritual and religious activities (12, 100%). The mass media was the remarkable means of obtaining spiritual support among participants (9, 75%). In conclusion, the screening tool developed was able to capture characteristics of elderly patients those who are ready for Post Discharge Plan and follow-up care (PDP&FC).

**Keywords:** *Post Discharge Plan and Follow-up Care (PDP&FC), Elderly Patients, Sri Lanka*