

DEVELOPMENT AND FEASIBILITY ASSESSMENT OF A NUTRITION SCREENING GUIDELINE IN ELDERLY PATIENTS FOR USE AMONG HEALTHCARE STAFF IN HEALTH CLINIC SETTINGS

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ABSTRACT

Objective: Elderly people are more susceptible to malnutrition. However, malnutrition identification through nutrition screening is not routinely performed in Malaysia health clinic settings. Major issue is due to no specific nutrition screening guideline and validated tool in this setting. This study aimed to develop a nutrition screening guideline in elderly patients and assess its feasibility for use among healthcare staff in health clinic settings.

Methodology: This study was conducted in three phases, including needs assessment, development of a nutrition screening guideline and feasibility assessment among healthcare staff from health clinics in Kuantan, Pahang. Needs assessment was conducted among healthcare staff. Development of nutrition screening guideline involved scoping review and validation among six experts and twelve healthcare staff. Revision was done based on provided suggestions. Then, twenty-two healthcare staff participated in the feasibility assessment using

in-depth interviews after completing nutrition screening. Data from interviews were analysed thematically using NVivo Software 12.0.

Results and Discussion: A nutrition screening guideline in A4-sized was developed and validated. Items that achieved content validity index ≥ 0.83 from experts review were remained; whilst < 0.83 were revised accordingly. Validation among healthcare staff showed positive responses. The guideline was then assessed for feasibility, where 110 elderly patients (mean age= 68.7 ± 6.1 years) were screened by healthcare staff using the newly developed nutrition screening guideline. Four themes obtained from in-depth interviews; Theme 1: Ease of use; Theme 2: Identification and management of malnutrition; Theme 3: Acceptability; and Theme 4: Implementation of nutrition screening. The findings are similar to previous studies that stated nutrition screening tool must be quick, easy to use and feasible for any settings.

Conclusion: The newly developed and validated nutrition screening guideline is well-accepted and feasible to healthcare staff in performing nutrition screening among elderly patients in health clinic setting for timely malnutrition identification and management.

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