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

Siti Nur Amirah Sheikh Hishamuddin1, *Aliza Haslinda Hamirudin1, Sakinah Harith2, Mohd Aznan Md Aris3, Karimah Hanim Abd Aziz4, Nurul Syaireen A.Rashid5

1Department of Nutrition Sciences, Kulliyyah of Allied Health Sciences, International Islamic University Malaysia, Jalan Sultan Ahmad Shah, 25200 Kuantan, Pahang.

2School of Nutrition and Dietetics, Faculty of Health Sciences, Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin, Kuala Terengganu, 21300 Terengganu.

3Department of Family Medicine, Kuliyyah of Medicine, International Islamic University Malaysia, Jalan Sultan Ahmad Shah, 25200 Kuantan, Pahang.

4Department of Community Medicine, Kuliyyah of Medicine, International Islamic University Malaysia, Jalan Sultan Ahmad Shah, 25200 Kuantan, Pahang.

5Primary Health Care Unit, Pahang Health State Department, Jalan IM4, Bandar Indera Mahkota, 25582 Kuantan, Pahang.

*Corresponding author: aliza@iium.edu.my

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.

**Acknowledgement:** FRGS/1/2018/SKK06/UIAM/02/5