

An Evaluation of Risk for Malnutrition and its Impact on Quality of Life among the Elderly Population in Battaramulla Area

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Nutrition is a vital factor for older adults, as malnutrition can significantly affect their quality of life. This study aimed to determine the prevalence of malnutrition, risk of malnutrition, quality of life, and associated factors among the elderly population in Battaramulla MOH area to underscore the importance of addressing malnutrition in enhancing the well-being of the aging population. A descriptive community-based study was conducted among 338 elderly persons aged 60 years, who attended elderly societies across 14 out of 19 Gramaniladhari divisions in the Battaramulla MOH area. Nutritional level was assessed using Mini Nutritional Assessment (MNA) questionnaire, and quality of life was assessed using the SF-36 questionnaire. Data analysis was performed using SPSS v25.0 and frequency, percentage chi square, correlation tests were conducted. ERC approval was received from KIU ERC (KIU/ERC/23/219) and further approval received from RDHS- Colombo District. Out of the 338 elderly persons, 56.21% (190) were female with a mean age of 69.77±7.712 years. The mean MNA score was 24.05 (SD±3.319). Among the participants, 201 (59.5%) had normal nutritional status (24 points), 125 (37.0%) were at risk of malnutrition (17–23.5 points), and the prevalence of malnutrition was 3.5% (17 points). Age (p0.000), income (p0.016), and medical problems (p0.037) were associated with the nutritional status. According to the SF-36 scores, 149 (44.1%) had a good quality of life, while 189 (55.9%) had a poor quality of life. The study revealed a strong and positive correlation (r0.236, p0.000) between nutritional status and overall quality of life. In conclusion, it is recommended that targeted nutritional interventions be implemented, particularly for those at risk of malnutrition, to improve their overall quality of life. Regular monitoring and support for elderly individuals with lower income and existing medical problems should also be prioritized to mitigate the malnutrition risk among the elderly population.

Keywords: *elderly persons, malnutrition, health-related quality of life*