



Service Priorities and Programmes
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Mild Cognitive Impairment—could they be detected in General out-patient clinics

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Introduction

Occupational Therapy (OT) has been playing an essential role in cognitive assessment and intervention. With the aging population, Dementia is increasingly alarming on the health care burden. Early detection of Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI) and early triage to appropriate service providers are very essential. The general out-patient clinics (GOPC) is one of the best platforms to identify the patients with MCI at the early stage. With the commencement of new Enhanced public and Primary Care Service (EPPS), the role of OT in screening and early intervention can be reinforced.

Objectives

The aim of this pilot study was to review the profile and characteristics of the patients with suspected cognitive impairment, in order to provide more information on MCI to further enhance service planning and development.

Methodology

This was a retrospective study conducted from Jan to Dec 2012. All patients referred from GOPC to CMC for cognitive assessment were included. Their demographic data and scores of the mental assessment were analyzed. Mini-Mental Score Examination (MMSE) was used as the cognitive assessment.

Result

70 cases were reviewed. The mean age was 80.1 (ranged 65-96) and 57% of them were female. The mean MMSE was 18.8 and mean cut off score was 20.5. The majority of them lived with relatives (76%), while the rest of them lived alone (17%) and in OAH (7%). More than half of them (57%) noted the memory problem less than one year. Most patients were detected before they have Behavioral and psychological symptoms of dementia (BPSD) (73%) as well as prior to fall (91%) or getting lost (88.6%). Conclusion Occupational therapists could screen out and triage the patients with mild cognitive impairment for appropriate management. e.g. community organization, memory clinic, as well as advice for home care and fall prevention. The enhanced OT services in GOPC can act as a good platform for early detection of MCI and further management and intervention.