

Magnitude of elderly male morbidities in selected hospitals of Northern Borneo, Sabah

Abstract

Background: As the Malaysian population has reached up to 28.25 million in 2010 and life expectancy of Malaysia has attained up to 71.6 for males and 76.4 for females, a significant increase in elderly morbidity is expected in the coming years. State health department of Sabah, Malaysia, is trying hard to improve the health of its 3.5 million people in Northern Borneo. Kudat and Kota Belud hospitals are covering the medical care needs of about 81,000 and 93,000 populations respectively. Objective: To highlight the hospital burden borne by elderly morbidities in two selected hospitals of Northern Borneo, a review of in-patient records from the above hospitals was done for 2009. All male in-patients aged 60 and above were included. Results: The study revealed the illness pattern of elderly males in two district hospitals. Although hypertension and heart diseases took the highest rank, malaria, tuberculosis and diarrhoea were still found to be a problem for elderly in both hospitals. The male admission for Chronic-obstructive pulmonary disease was significantly higher than female, whereas hospital fatality among male elderly was lower than their female counterparts. Universally, priorities are given to women and children, and hence men's health is often left out of the focus. Conclusions: This study presented a glimpse of male morbidities among elderly population of Sabah, Malaysia. However, results may not reflect the actual morbidity of elderly males in the community as this study was a hospital based retrospective case review. Thus, we recommend a community based survey.