

Health Care Seeking Behaviour of Elders in Sri Lanka: With Special Reference to Vavuniya District

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Contemporary Sri Lanka is rapidly grow up elderly population after the free health care services. Ageing is a natural process which associated with physiological and biological changes. Over 60 years age people are called ageing population in Sri Lanka. It has increased from 6.6% in 1981 to 12.5% in 2012 and expected to rise by 28% in 2050. Post war context create social issues in Vavuniya district where elderly people's healthcare problems were suddenly increased, Nowadays 8,790 elders are in this area. This study based on Vavuniya Ds division, Vavuniya district. Sampling selection was carried through purposive sampling and elders who live with their children and between 60 to 75 years age category as the sample of this study. 40 questionnaires and 10 case study were used as data collection techniques. The main objective of this study to identify the health seeking behavioural patterns of the elderly people and sub objective is to examine the health issues among elders. Results of this study, female elders are more concerned about their health rather than male elders. Male Elders who are living with their wife, enjoy their health care. Single female elderly population directly tell their health problems and seeking the health care for them. Most of the elders go to public hospital, pensioners and income earners go to private hospitals and clinics. Following religious worships and activities are common practice among the elders. Conclusion of the study, Most of them use western medicine also few of them follow Ayurveda, siddha and self-medicines. 60% of them go monthly clinics because of their impairment, illness, weakness and several chronic diseases. Education, income, family support, availability of house hold and food decide the health seeking behaviour of elders. Recommended that the health care and support should be strengthened from government, other organizations and household level working on elderly people to overcome barriers of appropriate health care seeking behaviour.

Keywords: Health, Elders, Behaviour, Medicine, Hospital