

Loneliness and Quality of Life among the Elderly Living in Residential Home Cares

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ABSTRACT

The number of people over 65 years old is expected to increase significantly, due to an increase in life expectancy, improved disease prevention, decrease in birth rates, etc. According to data from the National Institute of Statistics of Albania, INSTAT, the number of people over 65 years old in 2015 was 359,266 and by 2060 it is expected to reach 667,000. Longevity has no value if individuals do not have a high quality of life. Changes in the family structure and function result in many family members being unable to care for the elderly, leading to increased rates of institutionalization. For this reason, the elderly may perceive institutionalization as a negative phenomenon, which produces feelings of loneliness and decreases the quality of life. The aim of this study was to examine the relationship between loneliness and quality of life among elderly living in public residential care homes in Albania and to investigate the mediating role of perceived social support in this relationship. To carry out this study, the WHOQOL-BREF questionnaire, UCLA Loneliness Scale Version 3 and the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social were used. The study was conducted at 150 elderly who lived in 4 public residential care home, in Albania. The results showed that loneliness is associated with decreased quality of life at elderly. Social support may reduce the detrimental impact of loneliness on quality of life at elderly.

Keywords: ageing, institutionalization, isolation, social support, wellbeing