

Community-based geriatric care by the Family Health Centre Kondavil, University of Jaffna - A case study

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Introduction Geriatric medicine is gaining attention in Sri Lanka where the population is rapidly ageing. Community-based geriatric care has been found to be cost effective and appropriate in providing optimal health care to bedridden patients and their caregivers. The Family Health Centre (FHC), Kondavil, provides this service to its empanelled population.

Objective This study describes the community-based geriatric care provided by the FHC, Kondavil.

Methodology A mix of qualitative methodologies was used to test the effectiveness of the community-based geriatric care through iterative cycle of research, action and reflection. Patients' and care givers' reflections were obtained periodically during home visits and over the phone.

Results Twenty five patients and their caregivers have been receiving this care since 2014. The services provided include regular medical checkups, screening programmes, counseling sessions, home rehabilitation programmes and issuing medications. An interdisciplinary team of consultant family physician, consultant community physician, pre-intern doctors, health assistants, laborers and caregivers are involved in delivering the care. Out-of-hour services are delivered via telemedicine. Extended support is received from non-governmental organizations and well wishers. This model empowers the care givers and uplifts the patient's hopes for a life worth living. This model is assessed and modified by the stakeholders through monitoring and evaluating patients' wellbeing and caregivers' feedbacks.

Conclusion Community-based geriatric is a resurging model that has enabled provision of optimum care for the dependent patients in a low resource setting, improving the quality of life of patients and their caregivers. Moreover, involving a public health nursing officer will further enhance the quality of care.