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The influence of the attitude to life of long-living people on their functioning

Paulina Zabielska¹, Mariola Głowacka², Anna Jurczak², Marta Giezek², Katarzyna Karakiewicz³ and Beata Karakiewicz²

¹Department of Social Medicine and Public Health, Pomeranian Medical University in Szczecin, Poland

²State University of Applied Sciences in Płock, Poland

³Krawczyk - Independent Public Regional Hospital Arkońska Poland

Introduction: The EUROSTAT data shows that Poles occupy one of the last places among the residents of the EU who feel psychologically well. Meanwhile, subject literature treats optimism as a resource that makes life easier for everyone. The purpose of the research was to analyse the influence of a positive attitude towards life on the functioning of long-living persons.

Material and methods: The research was conducted in Poland in 2017. Among the participants of the survey, there were 98 long-living women and men between 90 and 103 years of age, out of which 64,9% declared a positive attitude towards life, 27,8% - an indifferent attitude and 7,2% - a negative. The study was conducted with the use of a direct surveying method. The questionnaire consisted of instrumental activities of daily living (IADL) evaluation scale, basic activities of daily living (ADL) evaluation scale, Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS), pressure sore risk assessment scale (Norton) and a proprietary questionnaire.

Results: The surveyed long-living persons mostly demonstrated good functionality, 74,5% among all the seniors proved themselves to be self-reliant in performing basic activities and 46,9% in instrumental activities. In both measurements of functionality in daily living, the seniors declaring a positive attitude towards life achieved higher scores than those with an indifferent and negative attitude. Attitude towards life very clearly differentiated the surveyed seniors with regard to aggravation of symptoms of depression. A moderate aggravation of depression was demonstrated by 34,4% seniors with a positive attitude and 47% with a negative attitude, whereas a serious aggravation of the problem was characteristic of only 7,8% of the respondents from the first group and as much as 41% of the seniors from the second group.

Conclusions: A positive attitude towards life has a beneficial influence on self-reliance; it reduces manifestations of depressive disorders and diminishes the risk of the development of pressure sores.

Biography

Paulina Zabielska, PhD - Employee of Department of Social Medicine and Public Health, Chair of Social Medicine of the Pomeranian Medical University in Szczecin. Her main point of interest in research are the issues concerning public health and environmental medicine

paulina.zabielska@pum.edu.pl

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