

THE PREVALENCE OF FRAILITY IN TAIWAN

台灣老人衰弱症的盛行率

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Since 1993, the elderly people over 65 years old in Taiwan has been over 7% of population, and this percentage was up to 11.2% in 2012. Taiwan has been transformed into an advanced-age society. What we concerned is that how to make old-age life healthier and to enhance the autonomy and quality of life of older persons.

The term "frailty" describes older persons in a state of multisystem decline including impaired strength, endurance and balance, impaired cognition and diminished physical functioning. Frail persons are considered to be at risk for falls, disability, morbidity and mortality. Definitions of frailty vary across different studies and several frailty markers have been developed by these researches. Estimating the prevalence of frailty enhance our understanding regarding the health burden of frailty in our population, which can provide information for health resources allocation and planning of health program.

In Taiwan, several studies reported prevalence of frailty in different areas. Contributory factors to frailty and its outcomes, and some clinical trials about intervention of reversing frailty were explored. In this talk, we will use the results of a cross-sectional study which was conducted in 1,347 Taiwanese elders in Taichung City, Taiwan in 2009 to compare those from other studies. Frailty was present in 17% of the Taiwan elderly population; and there were substantial variations by age, education level, diabetes mellitus, stroke, and sleep impairment. Developing programs for prevention and care of frailty in elders is important in our society.