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Digital Aging And Mental Health Deteriorations: How Can We Mitigate The Risk Among The Elderly With Liver Disease In Indonesia?

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Background : Indonesia is entering an aging society with an older people population reaching 30.16 million people (10.08%) in 2021 and it is predicted the proportion will be one-fifth in 2045. Senior citizen is the covid-19 most at risk due to comorbidities, when liver disease become one of the highest comorbid factors increasing death risk by 13.5 times while rising to 16.8 times in the elderly due to COVID-19 (Indonesian Covid-19 Task Force, 2020). This condition increases Indonesia's aging market on one side, but readiness challenges to this issue can be disastrous, such as low digital literacy will affect the lower QoL.

Methods : Using data from the 2014 Indonesia Family Life Survey (IFLS), this study aims to analyze mental health problems and mobile phone ownership in older adults (60+) with Liver disease. IFLS is a multi-level (individual, household, community, and facility levels), multi-topic, large-scale, and longitudinal survey that has been conducted in five waves since 1993. IFLS 2014 covers only 24 of all 34 Indonesian provinces. However, the covered provinces are also the most populated ones, so the survey is representative of 83% of the Indonesian population.

Results : The analysis shows that the proportion of elderly with liver disease reaches 4.07% and 59.2% are male. 57.5% of them experienced mental health problems (sleeping restless, bothered by things, hopeless, unable to concentrate, unhappy, and afraid) and the percentage is higher in men. However, the percentage of elderly with liver disease experiencing mental health problems will decrease by 6.8% when they have a mobile phone. The elderly Socioeconomic Status (SES) in Indonesia has a fairly diverse distribution between provinces. As much as 46,6% of the elderly with liver disease have mobile phones and 55,8% of them are still working. Nearly half of older people's educational attainment is in elementary school, which reaches 46.05 percent. Elderly SES influences the behavior of the elderly in using mobile phones. In general, the elderly with higher digital literacy prefer to seek treatment at a formal health facility than traditional practitioners such as shamans. They tend to seek outpatient care treatment at a community health center or Puskesmas (44,11%), specialist (29,41%), and private hospital (11,76%).

Conclusions : Increasing digital aging encourages elderly health literacy, as well as decreasing mental health problems. Mainstreaming the digital aging issue community-based care can help various information and services needed by the elderly to be healthier, independent, and with dignity.

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