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Association between leisure activities, anxiety, depression and well-being of older adults living in nursing homes in Slovakia

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Key words: anxiety, depression, leisure activities, older adults, subjective well-being.

Background

Engaging in leisure activities (LA) is associated with physical, psychological and social benefits leading to feelings of happiness, life satisfaction and successful ageing in older adults.

Objective

The objective is to examine associations between leisure activities and anxiety, depression, and well-being in older adults living in nursing homes in Slovakia.

Methods

Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale, Personal Well-being Index, and Leisure Activities Questionnaire (37 LA) were recorded and evaluated in a sample of 106 seniors. Associations between variables were examined by Pearson correlation analysis.

Results

The most common leisure activities of older adults included watching television, listening to the radio, reading magazines and newspapers, meditating, dancing, walking, listening to music, reading books, visiting church, friends and relatives, shopping, photography, and doing

crossword puzzles and brain teasers. Lower levels of anxiety and depression and higher levels of the cognitive aspect of personal well-being (life satisfaction) were significantly ($p \leq 0.05$) related to higher frequency of reading magazines, newspapers and books, internet activities, visiting relatives, friends, cultural and sporting events, and volunteering activities, from physical activities with walking, hiking and dancing, from cognitive activities with crosswords, puzzles, board games, from artistic activities with playing a musical instrument, listening to music and photography, and from spiritual activities with attending religious events and meditation.

Conclusion

Increased frequency of leisure activities could contribute to alleviate anxiety and depressive symptomatology in older people and increase their personal well-being and life satisfaction. The helping professions, including nurses, should focus on leisure activities supporting seniors living in nursing homes.