Unmet care needs of older individuals: prevalence, patterns and influencing factors

Dominika Kohanová[1], Mária Tomčíková[2], Andrea Solgajová[1]

[1] Department of Nursing, Faculty of Social Sciences and Health Care, Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, Nitra, Slovakia

[2] Department of Nursing, Jessenius Faculty of Medicine in Martin, Comenius University in Bratislava, Martin, Slovakia

Introduction

Understanding and identifying unmet needs are crucial for improving the quality of health and social care. Research addressing unmet needs among older individuals in Slovakia is insufficient, highlighting the need for further investigation into this pressing issue.

Aim

To determine the prevalence and patterns of unmet needs among older individuals living in home and community settings in the Žilina region, and to identify factors influencing the prevalence of unmet needs in older individuals.

Methods

Data were collected between September and November 2023 using the Camberwell Assessment of Need Short Appraisal Schedule-Patient (CANSAS-P), 2nd edition. The sample consisted of 160 older individuals.

Results

The average score of unmet needs for older individuals living in community was 6.49 (SD = 3.24) out of 22, while for those in home, the average score was 2.51 (SD = 2.35). The most common unmet needs for individuals living in community were related to household care (55.7%) and physical health (51.9%), influenced by age, education, perceived health status, use of glasses, mobility issues ($p \leq 0.05$). For older individuals living in home, unmet needs were identified in the areas of physical health (23.5%) and mental difficulties (22.2%), influenced by age, education, marital status, presence of chronic illness, medication use, vision problems, use of glasses, hearing problems, and mobility issues ($p \leq 0.05$).

Conclusion

Regular assessments using specialized tools like the CANSAS-P are recommended to monitor unmet needs continuously. Tailored interventions based on these assessments are crucial to address the evolving needs of older individuals effectively.