

**OP 05****Social Support and Quality of Life of Institutionalized and Non-institutionalized Older People: A Comparative Cross-sectional Study**

Wickramasinghe D.A.<sup>1#</sup>, Perera B.<sup>2</sup>, Gamage M.W.K.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Department of Nursing, Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, University of Ruhuna, Sri Lanka*

<sup>2</sup>*Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Ruhuna, Sri Lanka*

<sup>#</sup>*Corresponding author: dilrukshi.anu5@gmail.com*

**Background:** Social support (SS) enhances Quality of Life (QoL) of older people. Understanding of the variations of SS available for and perceived by institutionalized and non-institutionalized older people in Sri Lanka is important in promoting health of elderly population.

**Objectives:** To describe and compare relationships of QoL and SS between institutionalized and non-institutionalized older adults in Galle, Sri Lanka.

**Methods:** A comparative cross-sectional study was conducted using a conveniently selected sample of 70 institutionalized and 70 non-institutionalized older people in Galle. Validated scales of WHOQOL-BREF and Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) were used to assess QoL and SS of the target groups respectively. Higher scores in MSPSS indicated higher SS.

**Results:** The mean value of the total QoL scores was higher in non-institutionalized older people compared to that of others ( $66.4 \pm 21.3$  vs  $59.3 \pm 14.4$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). The mean value of the total MSPSS score was also higher in non-institutionalized compared to that of institutionalized older people ( $5.3 \pm 0.9$  vs  $3.9 \pm 1.1$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). The mean scores of family support ( $23.1 \pm 3.8$  vs  $12.8 \pm 7.3$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), support from the friends ( $19.1 \pm 5.1$  vs  $18.4 \pm 4.3$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and support from significant others ( $22.2 \pm 4.7$  vs  $4.0 \pm 1.8$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) were higher in non-institutionalized compared to that of institutionalized older people. There was a positive correlation between MSPSS scores and total QoL scores in the non-institutionalized older people ( $r = 0.34$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), but no such correlation was found between MSPSS scores and total QoL scores in the institutionalized older people ( $r = 0.054$ ,  $p = 0.655$ ).

**Conclusions:** The QoL of the non-institutionalized older people is better than that of institutionalized older people. One possible reason for this observation is that the SS perceived by non-institutionalized older people is higher than that of institutionalized older people. Social support systems available for institutionalized older people should be strengthened to improve their QoL.

**Keywords:** *Institutionalized older people, Non-institutionalized older people, Quality of life, Social support, Sri Lanka*