

## **406: The effects of health related help-seeking behaviors on health function among older adults**

**Rong J-R., Sung N-C.**

### **Objective:**

The purposes of this study were to examine the direct effects of perceived stress and health related help-seeking behaviors on physical and psychosocial functioning among older adults living alone.

### **Methods:**

A convenience sample of 260 Taiwanese elderly subjects aged from 65 to 85 years was used. Structural questionnaires were designed in the way of face-to-face interviews in order to gather research data. The variables of the study comprise five questionnaires, a demography questionnaire, Perceived Stress Scale, Health-Seeking Behavior Scale, Chinese Health Questionnaire and Community Living Skill Scale. The data collected were analysed using correlation, simple linear regression and multiple regression.

### **Results:**

The findings indicated that the variable perceived stress, significantly correlated with health related help-seeking behaviors ( $r = -.23, p < .001$ ), physiological functioning ( $r = -.58, p < .001$ ), and psychosocial functioning ( $r = -.68, p < .001$ ). In addition, the variable health related help-seeking behavior, significantly correlated with physiological functioning ( $r = -.39, p < .001$ ). Moreover, a hierarchical regression was performed to show the partial influence of demographic variables on the relationship between perceived stress and health related help-seeking behaviors, and physical and psychosocial functions. The results indicated that perceived stress and health related help-seeking behaviors had an additive effect on health functioning.

### **Conclusions:**

The results of this study suggest that nursing interventions should enhance stress management, and facilitate health-seeking behaviors by teaching or reinforcing the skills constituting health related help-seeking behavior. Both health-seeking training and cognitive-behavioral techniques of stress management might also be advisable for nurses, to better assist older adults in coping with chronic health problems, life stress events and in promoting independent and productive lifestyles.