

1. Abstract

Objectives: To examine the prevalence of psychiatric morbidities, especially depressive disorders, in Chinese Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) outpatients and compare the psychiatric profiles and profiles of suicidal behaviour (current and lifetime) in depressed COPD patients with non-depressed COPD patients and the matched controls in the community.

Methods: 153 COPD patients and 212 age-gender matched control subjects were recruited from the Respiratory Clinic and social centres respectively. All subjects were assessed on their physical and psychological health status, suicide ideation, quality of life, as well as other life circumstances using structured questionnaires.

Results: The prevalence of DSM-IV depressive disorders in the COPD patients and controls were 15% and 2.8% respectively. 26.1% of depressed COPD patients, 13.8% of non-depressed COPD patients and 12.3% of the controls endorsed suicide ideation on the Geriatric Mental State Examination-Version A (GMS-A). Depressed COPD patients endorsed greater impairment in health-related quality of life measured by SGRQ and SF-12. Only 21.7% of the depressed COPD patients had consulted psychiatrists before

our interview.

Conclusion: Depressive disorders and impaired health-related quality of life are experienced more often in COPD patients than normal elderly controls from the community. There is strong evidence on the unmet mental health needs in elders with COPD.

Keywords: chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, depression, depressive disorders, suicide ideation, outpatients