

12th Nursing and Healthcare Congress

October 03-05, 2016 Vancouver, Canada

Detecting health warning signs of people with intellectual disability (ID) having difficulty in expressing symptoms in the community: An interview survey

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Aim: The first phase of this interview survey was conducted to detect health warning signs of people with ID having difficulty of expressing their symptoms by their family in the community.

Method: A metropolitan area was chosen (Area Z) in which the ID population ratio was similar to the national average. Following consent from seven parents of two workplaces for people with ID in Area Z, their interviews were analyzed using qualitative inductive analysis.

Results: The subjects' families with ID were five males and two females in the 20's to 50 are, with ID ranging from mild to severe. The parents noticed only slight differences in the usual health states of their family members with ID in their complexions, facial expressions, appetite, appearance of listlessness, and their unusual silence. The signs easily observed as health warning by the parents were cough, runny nose, extreme body temperatures, and frequency of toilet use, diarrhea, and vomiting. It was difficult for the families to detect where the individuals with ID felt pain, or to assess the degree of the pain, or to forecast sudden vomiting, or to observe excrement prior to their flushing the toilet.

Conclusion: Not only do we need to focus on how to detect unnoticeable health warning signs of individuals with ID, but also further focus on how to communicate the subtle nuances that can help distinguish abnormalities in the usual state of health.

Biography

Sooja Kim has completed her PhD from Kawasaki University of Medical Welfare. She is an Associated Professor of Kanagawa University of Human Services, School of Nursing.

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