

DESCRIPTION OF ELDERLY COPING WITH CHRONIC DISEASES:**A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY**

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ABSTRACT

Elderly people with chronic illnesses have demands to adjust to old age, as well as adapting to new lifestyles to maintain physical stability due to their illness. Elderly people with two or more chronic diseases are more vulnerable to experiencing psychological distress which will worsen their health condition. Conditions of Psychological distress encourage them to make efforts to reduce discomfort, and/or overcome problems resulting from chronic illness, which refer to as a coping mechanism. The aim of this research is to understand coping formation in elderly people with chronic diseases. This research was qualitative research with a phenomenological approach. The total of 4 participants selected by purposive sampling technique. Data collection used semi-structured interviews with in-depth interview methods. The data was analysed using descriptive phenomenological analysis. The results showed that there were 13 synthetic themes, such as the causes of chronic disease, emotional shock from being diagnosed as having chronic disease, negative affect after the diagnosis of chronic disease, chronic disease as an obstacle, financial stress, meaning of life, acceptance, spiritual coping, cognitive coping, social coping, behavioral coping, well-being, and social support. The conclusion is all participants implemented behavioral coping as a coping strategy to deal with physical illness as a consequence of the chronic disease. Each participant applies a combination of several coping strategies. This condition determines that the elderly implement adaptive and integrative efforts to deal with chronic diseases.

Keywords: *coping mechanisms; elderly; chronic disease*