



Economic Benefits of Nutrition and Health in Living Adults

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DESCRIPTION

Nutrition-focused care is an evidence-based approach that integrates nutrition assessment, diagnosis, intervention, and monitoring to promote optimal nutrition status and improve health outcomes. The implementation of nutrition-focused care in community-living adults has been shown to improve healthcare utilization and reduce healthcare costs. This article will discuss the economic benefits of nutrition-focused care in community-living adults and its impact on healthcare utilization. Community-living adults refer to individuals who live independently or with family members in non-institutional settings. These individuals are at risk of malnutrition due to various factors such as age-related changes, chronic diseases, and socioeconomic factors. Malnutrition is a significant health concern that can lead to adverse health outcomes, including increased morbidity and mortality rates, longer hospital stays, and increased healthcare costs.

Nutrition-focused care is a comprehensive approach that considers the individual's nutritional needs, preferences, and goals. It involves nutrition screening, assessment, and diagnosis to identify individuals at risk of malnutrition and those who require nutrition interventions. The nutrition interventions may include dietary modifications, nutrition education, counseling, and oral nutritional supplements. Studies have shown that implementing nutrition-focused care in community-living adults can improve healthcare utilization and reduce healthcare costs. For instance, evaluated the impact of implementing nutrition-focused care in community-living adults aged 65 years and older. The study found that individuals who received nutrition-focused care had a 6.2% reduction in hospital admissions and a 3.3% reduction in emergency department visits compared to those who did not receive nutrition-focused care. Additionally, the study reported a cost savings of approximately \$1,300 per patient per year.

A study evaluated the impact of nutrition interventions on healthcare utilization and costs in community-living adults with

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD). The study found that nutrition interventions, including oral nutritional supplements and nutrition counseling, were associated with a significant reduction in hospital admissions and healthcare costs. Specifically, the study reported a 44% reduction in hospital admissions and a \$4,244 reduction in healthcare costs per patient per year. The economic benefits of nutrition-focused care in community-living adults can be attributed to several factors. First, malnutrition is associated with an increased risk of hospitalization, longer hospital stays, and higher healthcare costs. By addressing malnutrition through nutrition-focused care, healthcare utilization and costs can be reduced. Second, nutrition-focused care can improve health outcomes and quality of life, leading to a reduction in healthcare costs. For example, improving nutrition status can reduce the risk of falls, improve wound healing, and reduce the incidence of pressure ulcers, which can lead to reduced healthcare costs. Third, nutrition-focused care can help prevent the progression of chronic diseases, which are a significant driver of healthcare costs. Malnutrition is common in individuals with chronic diseases, and improving nutrition status can help prevent disease progression and reduce the need for expensive treatments and hospitalizations.

CONCLUSION

Nutrition-focused care is an evidence-based approach that can improve healthcare utilization and reduce healthcare costs in community-living adults. The implementation of nutrition-focused care involves nutrition screening, assessment, and diagnosis, followed by nutrition interventions to address malnutrition and improve nutrition status. The economic benefits of nutrition-focused care can be attributed to the prevention of hospitalizations, reductions in healthcare costs, and improvements in health outcomes and quality of life. Therefore, healthcare providers should consider implementing nutrition-focused care in community-living adults as part of their standard care practice.

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