ABSTRACT

Laughter Therapy Effectiveness to Reduce Depression Level in Elderly at St. Yosef Senior House Surabaya and Bhakti Luhur Senior House Sidoarjo

Aging was a natural process in which elderly experience physical, cognitive, psychological, and spiritual changes. Psychic changes in elderly include mood disorders or depression. One treatment for depression was to provide laughter therapy. Laughter therapy was a therapy method of using laughter done in groups in order to help individuals reducing problems either in the form of physical and mental disorders. The use of laughter therapy was increase endorphins or hormones of happiness, which gives the feeling of relieve and positive emotions in individuals. This was because laughter naturally produces pain relief and reduce depression. This study was to determine the effectiveness of laughter therapy on the level of depression in the elderly. This was a quasi experimental study in elderly at St. Yosef Senior House and Bhakti Luhur Senior House Sidoarjo using non randomized control pretest posttest design. Samples who met inclusion criteria consisted of 35 individuals, divided into treatment groups of 19 individuals and control group 16 individuals. Elderly at St. Yosef Senior House served as treatment group and elderly at Bhakti Luhur Senior House served as control group. Both groups performed measurements of depression at the same time before and after laughter therapy using standard instruments of Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS). Changes in depression scores both in treatment and control groups were not normally distributed. It was tested with Mann Whitney test with p = 0.000, showing significant difference in depression scores changes between treatment and control groups. Thus, laughter therapy is effective in lowering the level of depression in elderly at St. Yosef Senior House Surabaya and Bhakti Luhur Senior House Sidoarjo.

Keywords: elderly, depression and laughter therapy