

Over64 people national surveillance: indications to reduce health inequities, Italy 2012

Ferrelli RM, Antoniotti MC., Baldi A., Bianco E., Biscaglia L., Carrozzi G., Chiti L., Cristofori M., Contoli B., De Luca A., Di Fiandra T., Penna L., Perra A.

Ferrelli RM, Istituto Superiore di Sanità (National Institute of Health), Rome, Italy Antoniotti MC (Piemonte Region Epidemiology Service, Local Health Unit, Novara, Italy)

Baldi A (Lunigiana District Zone, Local Health Unit, Massa e Carrara, Italy)

Bianco E (Unit of Surveillance and Prevention of Chronic Diseases, Local Health Unit, Avellino, Italy)

Biscaglia L (Public Health Agency, Lazio Region, Rome, Italy)

Carrozzi G (Public Health Department, Local Health Unit, Modena, Italy)

Chiti L (Pistoia District, Local Health Unit, Pistoia, Italy)

Contoli B (National Centre for Epidemiology, Surveillance and Health Promotion, National Institute of Health, Rome, Italy)

Cristofori M (Study Centre for Biostatistic Research in Food Safety, Local Health Unit, Terni, Italy)

De Luca A (Epidemiology and health Statistics Unit, Provincial Health Unit, Cosenza, Italy)

Di Fiandra T (General Direction of Prevention, Ministry of Health, Rome, Italy)

Penna L (National Centre for Epidemiology, Surveillance and Health Promotion, National Institute of Health, Rome, Italy)

Perra A (National Centre for Epidemiology, Surveillance and Health Promotion, National Institute of Health, Rome, Italy)

Background

Social health determinants, such as level of education, working conditions, income & access to healthcare, can affect people's health behaviour & increase their risk for chronic non-communicable diseases (NCD). Due to their progressivity over life course, NCD concentrate in over64, thus contributing to developing frailty in the elders. If not properly addressed, those underlying drivers may hinder health promotion strategies. According to WHO, health surveillance is a strategic tool to fight NCD. Due to NCD prevalence among people over64 & to the importance of monitoring elders' health status & needs, the Italian Government supported a nationwide surveillance system: Silver Steps (Passi d'Argento - PDA).

Methods

PDA surveillance is carried out on a over64 population sample, stratified by sex & age classes, randomly selected from Local Health Units' list of resident, phone or face-to-face interviewed with a standardised & validated questionnaire on socio-demographic characteristics, health status perception, life styles, access to health care & income availability. A proxy helped in case of physical/psychic inability. Uni- & multivariate analysis of collected data uses Epi-Info & Stata. The system is routinely running since 2012.

Results

PDA carried out 23.976 interviews in 2012 in Italian Regions (91% phone interviews & 9% face-to-face). Concerning the level of education, 60% got no school or primary school & 5% University degree. Concerning income, 58% refer difficulties. Percentage rises among people with low education level (69%). One out of 3 refers difficulties in accessing health & social services, but percentage rises up to 3 times among those with low education level & those who refer economic difficulties. Prevalence of at least one NCD is 63%. Difficulties in instrumental activity of daily living (IADL) is 36% (14% in ADL). These values increase among those with low education level to 67% for NCD & to 45% for IADL & among those who refer economic difficulties to 70% for NCD & to 40% for IADL.

Conclusions

PDA results showed that the health status is worse among people with low income & level of education compared to better off. These data on social health determinants could help explaining health inequities within & among Italian Regions.

Main message

Silver Steps highlight worse health for people with low education & income, bringing a potential to develop & monitor multisectoral policy initiatives & interventions aimed to reduce health inequities