

Increasing Psychological Well-Being in Children with Chronic Illness through Social Support Intervention in Haji Adam Malik Hospital, Medan Tuntungan

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Abstract. Chronic illness is a disorder/disability due to medical conditions that are present continuously for 3 months or more which may affect the functioning of a child's life. The effects of chronic illness and long-term treatment lead to individual psychological problems for children, such as feeling sad, withdrawing and other emotional problems. Poor psychological well-being conditions often exacerbate chronic childhood illness. Children become lazy to take medication and not obedient in doing treatment. The purpose of this devotion is to improve psychological well-being of children with chronic illness through social support interventions. This program will be carried out with a cadre of 3 partners who are nurses from Haji Adam Malik hospital. The nurses will be trained, so they can provide the social support for children during hospitalization to improve the psychological well-being of the children. After the training social support interventions implementation module will be tested to 20 chronic illness children in Haji Adam Malik hospital with the nurse as a facilitator.

Keywords: Chronic Illness, Social Support Intervention, Haji Adam Malik Hospital

Abstrak. Penyakit kronik (*chronic illness*) adalah suatu gangguan/ ketidakmampuan karena kondisi medis yang hadir secara terus-menerus selama 3 bulan atau lebih yang dapat berpengaruh terhadap keberfungsian hidup anak. Efek penyakit kronik dan perawatan dalam jangka waktu panjang mengakibatkan masalah psikologis tersendiri bagi anak, misalnya merasa sedih, menarik diri dan masalah emosional lainnya. Seringkali kondisi kesejahteraan psikologis yang buruk turut memperburuk penyakit kronik anak. Anak menjadi malas minum obat dan tidak patuh dalam menjalani pengobatan. Adapun tujuan dari pengabdian yang akan dilakukan adalah meningkatkan kesejahteraan psikologis pada anak penderita penyakit kronis melalui *social support interventions*. Program ini akan dilakukan dengan mengkader 3 orang mitra yaitu perawat Rumah Sakit Haji Adam Malik. Para perawat akan dilatih

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sehingga mampu memberikan social support yang dibutuhkan anak selama masa perawatan di Rumah Sakit sehingga dapat meningkatkan kesejahteraan psikologis anak. Setelah pelatihan pada perawat, modul pelaksanaan social support interventions akan dicobakan kepada 20 anak penderita penyakit kronik di RSHAM dengan fasilitator dari perawat.

Kata Kunci: *Penyakit Kronik, Social Support Intervention, Rumah Sakit Haji Adam Malik*

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1. Introduction

In the present, many children are found with chronic diseases. As for what is meant by chronic disease (chronic illness) is a disorder / disability due to medical conditions that are present continuously for 3 months or more which can affect the functioning of the child's life [1]. One of the chronic illness that many children suffer from is acute lymphocytic leukemia or commonly called ALL. The survey results at HAM Hospital, shown that the number of Thalassemia sufferers in 2011-2014 were 113 people in total. Thalassemia is a blood disorder that was inherited (genetic), where the sufferer experiences an imbalance in the production of hemoglobin (Hb) [2].

Patients who experience chronic illness will experience dependence on the family due to limitations and disabilities in response to the chronic illnesses. Chronic illness will cause stress to children and families. Children who suffer from chronic illness really need serious attention, commitment, and a hard struggle from family members to care of them. Not all family members can accept and adapt quickly which will make children with chronic illness feel more stressed and pressured. This condition ultimately causes the child to often display some psychological symptoms such as feeling excessively sad, withdrawing from others. This is because children feel excluded from their environment such as family, friends and school or even rebellious attitudes. Children with chronic illness do need to be informed about their illness and to be more involved in taking care of themselves related to their disease activities such as medication, therapy and so on. This is done so that children with chronic diseases can have better self-awareness about their physical condition. When a child is diagnosed with a chronic illness by a doctor, it is better for parents or family to always accompany the child in the treatment process. This is important so that the child feels he is not excluded from his family so he becomes excited in the treatment process [3]. Furthermore, this is also expected to improve psychological well-being.

North Sumatra is the fourth largest province in Indonesia. The high level of population density is dominated by urban areas. North Sumatra Province has a provincial hospital, it is the Haji Adam Malik Hospital (HAM Hospital). As a referral hospital, HAM Hospital is the hospital that treats the highest number of children with chronic illness. One of the pediatricians at HAM hospital stated that they treated patients with chronic illness approximately 30 children per day and usually hospitalization was carried out 3 days to 7 days. Medical services provided to children with chronic illness are quite good at the hospital. It's just that besides the medical treatments, the children with chronic illness need to get psychological services. HAM Hospital, in this case, doctors and nurses feel the need for psychological services for children so that children have more positive perceptions of their treatment. But nurses themselves feel that they lack the ability to provide services with a psychological approach to the children they take care of.

Many social support activities can be provided to children with chronic illness who are being treated at the Hospital to increase children's psychological well-being [4]. One of the activities offered is Social Support Interventions, which is given in the form of instrumental social support training, providing direct assistance in the form of services to improve the psychological well-being of children with chronic illness. Social Support Interventions can be given in various forms [5]. But the activities that you want to give to this service are relaxation, art therapy and play therapy. Relaxation is an attempt to teach someone to relax, by making the person aware of the tense feelings and the relaxed feelings of the main muscle groups such as the hands, face, and neck, chest, shoulders, back, abdomen and legs. The art therapy, can help to overcome trauma and other mental stress problems. Art is fun and soothing and is a great stress reliever. Play therapy is a therapy that uses playing methods as a medium to explore thoughts, feelings and behavior. Helps develop therapeutic relationships and helps children to communicate their problems.

2. Method

This activity was carried out in the child section of the HAM Hospital. This training involved nursing staff who served in the child section of the HAM Hospital. Before starting our devotion activities we gave a pre-test in the form of questions related to social support intervention, so that we can know the extent to which nurses knowledge and understanding to the right form of social support in dealing with children with chronic illness. In this activity, nurses were given information about social support intervention. Nurses also discussed psychological issues they

often face in the field. The activity on the second day, still involved nursing staff in child section of Adam Malik Hospital. The second day activities, nurses were given the skills they can apply in carrying out social support intervention to children. On the third day, the team conducted social support activities for children in the form of relaxation, play therapy and art therapy. These activities aim to provide examples to partners in implementing psychological services for children with chronic illness who are undergoing treatment at the H. Adam Malik Hospital Medan. Art therapy activities, children were asked to draw freely and talked about pictures. In children's play therapy activities, they were invited to listen to a story played by a co-facilitator. After the completion of the devotion, nurses who took part in the training were asked to do the post-test with the same material during the pre-test. This is to see how far the understanding of nurses in providing appropriate social support intervention. At the end of the activity, team submitted a number of supporting items that can be used by partners in carrying out social support intervention on children.

3. Result and Discussion

Overall, this training activity was quite successful. This can be seen from the increase in understanding and knowledge before and after training (pre-test and post-test). The test questions consisted of 15 questions, the average result of the pretest was 9, while the average post-test results were 14.2. In addition, it can be seen from the responses of participants who were very enthusiast in asking questions in the question and answer session on training material that was poorly understood. The Hospital through partners requested that on another occasion, USU community service team could come back to provide similar training with more participants.

The results of the average pre-test (9) and post-test (14.2) indicate an increase, in other words it can be said that the training participants understand enough the training material provided, so that in the future the partners are expected to have the skills to provide social support in children with chronic illness. The method of delivering interesting and targeted material makes the trainees able to capture the intent and purpose of what is conveyed by the trainer. In addition the responses of the participants who were very enthusiast in asking questions in the question and answer session and the hospital through partners asked that on another occasion, USU community service team could come back to provide similar training with more participants indicating that the trainees which in this case is partners, aware that social support intervention is needed by children with chronic illness to improve their psychological well-being.

4. Conclusion

1. Nurses understand more on the administration of social support interventions that are most appropriate to the conditions and needs of children with chronic illness,
2. A more synergistic relationship is established between nurses and children with chronic illness while undergoing treatment,
3. This training activity is not only aimed to reduce negative emotions felt by the child but is also useful for achieving the psychological well-being of children with chronic illness,
4. A better psychological state of a child that will be able to improve its function in everyday life,
5. After the implementation of our training activities, it is expected that the hospital, especially the nurses in the children section can continue these skills so that the role of nurses can take place optimally in order to improve the psychological well-being of children with chronic illness.

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