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## Mortality among elder abuse victims in rural Malaysia: A two-year population-based descriptive study

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### ABSTRACT



Our study aims at describing mortality among reported elder abuse experiences in rural Malaysia. This is a population-based cohort study with a multistage cluster sampling method. Older adults in Kuala Pilah ( $n = 1,927$ ) were interviewed from November 2013 to May 2014. Mortality was traced after 2 years using the National Registration Department database. Overall, 139 (7.2%) respondents died. Fifteen (9.6%) abuse victims died compared to 124 (7.0%) not abused. Mortality was highest with financial abuse (13%), followed by psychological abuse (10.8%). There was a dose-response relationship between mortality and clustering of abuse: 7%, 7.7%, and 14.0% for no abuse, one type, and two types or more, respectively. Among abuse victims, 40% of deaths had ill-defined causes, 33% were respiratory-related, and 27% had cardiovascular and metabolic origin. Results suggest a link between abuse and mortality. Death proportions varied according to abuse subtypes and gender.

### KEYWORDS

Abuse outcome; descriptive study; effects of elder abuse; elder mistreatment; exploratory; family violence; Malaysia; mortality

## Introduction

Elder abuse and neglect (EAN) is becoming a global health concern with the ongoing rapid demographic transition worldwide, especially in developing countries. The Action on Elder Abuse in the United Kingdom has defined EAN as “a single or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust which causes harm or distress to an older person” (Dixon et al., 2010). Five categories of EAN—physical, psychological, financial, sexual, and neglect—have been widely recognized (Laumann, Leitsch, & Waite, 2008). The worldwide pre-valence of EAN was reported to range from 3.2% to 27.5% (Cooper, Selwood,

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