INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Functional decline is considered one of the major complications of the hospitalized elderly patients. It contributes to a loss of independence and self-esteem, worsening lifestyle, and deteriorating quality of life. Their psychological impact is necessary to be addressed and identified in order to promote their quality of life while after discharge with functional decline.

AIM

The purpose of this study was to explore the experience and coping process of elders with functional decline in their activities of daily living (ADL).

METHODS

Research design

This study based on grounded theory by using a semi-structured interview guideline.

Data collection

Purposive sampling
Using a semi-structured interview guideline
In-depth interviews

Participants

The inclusion criteria were:
(1)sixty five and over, had functional decline in activity of daily within one year< (2)had clear conscious, (3) could speak Mandarin or Taiwanese, (4) non living in a nursing care institution, (5) no history of psychiatry diseases.

Data analysis

Content analysis

Ethical considerations

This study was approved by the ethic committee of the medical center.

PRELIMINARY RESULTS

Two female and one male with mean age of 78 were involved in this preliminary study. Barthel Index Assessment showed their score of ADL ranged from 85 to 90. Six main themes of the experience and coping process emerged in the preliminary findings (Table 1).

Table 1 The experience and coping process of elders with functional decline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Suffering from physical discomfort</td>
<td>Pain Discomfort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeking treatment</td>
<td>Dr shopping Obey orders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being limited in daily living</td>
<td>Limited for mobilization Limited for socialization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusting living style</td>
<td>Adjust living environment Using alternative method Call for help</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusting personal feeling</td>
<td>Endure personal feeling Don't want to burden with others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reconstructing the life belief</td>
<td>Destiny arrangement Hopeless</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CONCLUSIONS

The study found that the elders with functional decline accompanied various negative effects physically or psychologically. For adjusting the functional decline, the elders adopted various methods to solve their problems and readjusted their lives. Before providing care and resources for those elderly, health caregivers have to understand what problems the elders may experience and what coping strategies they apply. The findings provide a reference for follow-up care in elders with functional decline. The study has been keeping to recruit elders until the data analysis are saturated.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors gratefully acknowledge the three elders.