Abstract

Background: As the population ages, changes occur in the epidemiological profile towards the current predominance of chronic degenerative diseases which, when untreated, lead to loss of functional capacity and require long-term assistance. Objectives: To describe the profile of the elderly attending the geriatric physical therapy service and to identify factors associated with functional disability. Method: A cross-sectional descriptive analytical study was conducted. The medical records of elderly individuals were analyzed using the first physical therapy assessment, which included sociodemographic, clinical and mobility data. To determine the degree of disability (mild/moderate), the Brazilian Multidimensional Functional Assessment Questionnaire (BOMFAQ) was used. Descriptive analysis and univariate logistic regression were performed, followed by multivariate logistic regression. Results: The sample comprised 130 elderly patients with a mean age of 73.3 [standard deviation (SD)=7.2] years-old, predominantly female (63.9%), sedentary (71.5%) and presenting three to four diseases (47.7%). The mean of activities with difficulty in the BOMFAQ was 6.7 (SD=4.8), 35 (26.9%) individuals presented mild disability and 95 (73.1%) moderate. The participant characteristic that presented a greatest risk of disability was self-reporting of poor health (OR=12.4). The factors identified, which together can determine functional decline, were sedentary lifestyle, presence of dizziness, polypharmacy and high pain intensity. Conclusions: Elderly individuals attended by the geriatric physical therapy service showed a profile associated with disability, characterized by potentially modifiable factors. This profile also reinforces the demand for long-term care for this population.

Keywords
Physical therapy, health services for the aged, aged, disabled health.