

SUMMARY

This study was on patterns of use of clinic facilities by cardiac patients at Coronary Care Unit -National Hospital of Sri Lanka. Gathering information on sociodemographic characteristics of patients, evaluating availability and quality of some services at the clinics and there by recommending measures to improve the services were the objectives of this study.

Out patient clinics at CCU were selected for the study. A sample of 400 eligible patients were studied during the period of 23rd June and 9th July. 1 in 5 systematic sampling technique was used to select patients on each day . They were studied using a pretested Interviewer administered questionnaire. A questionnaire was also administered to the medical officers (house officers) who conduct the clinic, to obtain their views regarding some aspects of services. Observation of some patient care services were carried out using a structured observation schedule.

The sample of patients consisted of 61.5% males. More than 80% of both sexes were over 50 years old. Majority 61.5% had not studied beyond grade 9 and 41.5% had a monthly income of less than Rs 3000.00 per month. 43% of the sample were pensioners.

Average clinic attendance during the study period was 338 per session , for three medical officers to attend within 2 hour period. 94% travelled 5 km or more to get to the clinic while 58% travelled 10km.or more. 69.8% of the sample bypassed

another medical clinic which could have treated them. There was a statistically significant difference between bypassing and the sex of the patient ($P < .001$) Relationships between bypass status and educational level, age group or income level were not statistically significant. ($P > .05$)

Patients spent a mean of 5.3 hours (SD 1.78 hours) to see a doctor and a mean of 1.4 hours (SD 0.37 hours) to get the drugs. Average doctor patient contact time observed using the observation schedule was only 1.93 minutes.

Over crowding was a main feature of this clinic, leading to poor quality of care. No organized referral system was in operation in the clinic. Very little educational activities were carried out in the clinic. 28.7% couldn't name any risk factors for cardiac illnesses. 31.2% knew nothing about the control measures. Only 16.5% could name their drugs correctly.

There was no separate laboratory services at CCU. 70.6% of patients who were ordered blood investigations, got them done privately. Availability of drugs were not 100% and regular. Only 44.8% of patients got all their drugs from the pharmacy here. Only 51.3% patients had any document with them giving details of the illness while only 61.3% had a document giving details of medications.

Physical facilities were observed to be inadequate. Patients had to be standing in the waiting halls due to lack of seats. Furniture and equipment in the consultation rooms were not enough.

75.4% of patients were dissatisfied about the time scheduled for the clinic and 91% were dissatisfied about the waiting time. Despite all these findings 81.6% were satisfied with the quality of services at the clinic while 92% were satisfied with the courtesy of the staff at CCU.

Majority of the medical officers studied were not satisfied regarding the number of patients per session, availability of laboratory services, dispensing of drugs and patient education activities in the clinic

Key words: Cardiac clinic, Utilization pattern, NHSL