Impact of a nurse-led management program on heart failure quality indicators

Authors:
U Stojanovic¹, K Jansa Trontelj¹, ¹University Medical Centre of Ljubljana, Vascular Medicine - Ljubljana - Slovenia,

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Background: Heart failure management requires continuous patient education and monitoring. Nurse-led heart failure management programs provide potential means for improving management of patients with chronic heart failure.

Aim: To assess the impact of nurse-led heart failure management program on quality indicators of heart failure management.

Methods: Outpatients attending the heart failure outpatient clinic of the department of vascular medicine at a university clinical center were enrolled into a nurse-led heart failure management program, and compared to usual care. The program consisted of: education and lifestyle counseling, cardioprotective medicine titration and monitoring. Quality indicators of heart failure management (i.e. number of patients achieving optimal therapy and maintaining weight) are collected from patient records before and after the study period of 6 months.

Results: A total of 100 records were reviewed: 50 from patients in the nurse-led management program (with an average of 4 outpatient visits) and 50 controls. There was no difference in age (mean 80 years) or gender (39% female). Patients in the intervention group were more likely to reach optimal dose of ACE inhibitor (38 vs. 18%, p=0.002), while other medication was comparable between the two groups. More importantly, in the intervention group only 12% of patients experienced weight gain as opposed to 42% in the control group (p<0.001).

Conclusion: Nurse-led heart failure management program improves management of patients with chronic heart failure.