E-Poster

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Evaluation of the Loss to Follow-up of Adult Patients With Cerebral Palsy During the Pandemic in a Rehabilitation Service

Topic: Disability studies

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BACKGROUND

The COVID-19 pandemic, declared on March 11, 2020 by the World Health Organization (WHO), has quickly become one of the most impactful health crises in contemporary history. In addition to the direct consequences of infection with the SARS-CoV-2 virus, this pandemic has brought a series of challenges for the global health system and rehabilitation services. Patients with cerebral palsy were some of the millions of people affected during the pandemic period, where a number of barriers impacted the continuity of care for this population. This work aims to investigate a crucial aspect of the COVID-19 pandemic: the loss to follow-up of patients with cerebral palsy seen at our service.

METHODS

This is a cross-sectional, observational and retrospective study analyzing the medical records of patients with cerebral palsy. Data was collected on gender, age, GMFCS scale, classification of cerebral palsy according to topography and motor type. Patients with a diagnosis of cerebral palsy with at least 18 years old were included in our research.

RESULTS

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a significant reduction in outpatient care, especially after social restriction measures were put in place. The fear of contamination associated with public policies has drastically affected the health service. Between 2019 and 2020, 158 adult patients with cerebral palsy were being followed up by the Physiatry service at Santa Casa de São Paulo and of these, 64 were lost to follow-up during the COVID-19 pandemic, which represented 40.5% of the cases. Thirty-three patients were female (51.5%) and 31 were male (48.4%). The majority of patients was classified as GMFCS V (31.25%) and the most common clinical/motor type was spastic (82.8%), followed by mixed type (15.6%). In this study, we had 53 spastic patients, of whom 23 were quadriplegic (43.4%), 20 were diplegic (37.7%) and 10 were hemiplegic (18.8%).

CONCLUSION

The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact in outpatient care, leading to a significant loss of follow-up in our service. This was a reflection of factors like restrictive measures and fear of contamination, especially in patients with higher GMFCS, who have more associated morbidities and greater risk of complications.

Statement of Disclosures

None

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