

ID:182

Topic: AS05 Epidemic and Pandemic health care / 5.1 Covid-19/Ebola/Lassa fever/Meningitis and emerging infections

**KNOWLEDGE, PERCEPTION AND ATTITUDE OF PATIENTS AT HUBERT KOUTOUGOU MAGA (HKM)-
NATIONAL UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL CENTER (NUHC) OF COTONOU ABOUT COVID-19**

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Background: COVID-19 has been noticed in Benin since March 2020. Various measures have been put in place to curb the epidemic. The objective of the study is to evaluate the knowledge and perception of patients at the HKM-NUHC about COVID-19. This was a cross-sectional study with descriptive and analytical purposes. Data were collected on 7 months. Included were patients who came for medical consultation. Data analysis was done with R 4.1.0 software. A total of 353 respondents were included in the study. The sex ratio was 0.81. The mean age was 48.9 ± 16.8 [10; 92] years. The level of education was at least high school in 82.2% of the cases. The agent responsible for COVID-19 and the mode of transmission were not known, respectively, by 31.7% and 89.2% of the participants. Barrier measures were known by 46.2%, while clinical manifestations were known by 89.0%. Only the level of education was associated with knowledge of COVID-19 ($p < 0.001$).

Methods: This was a cross-sectional study with descriptive and analytical purposes. Data were collected from July 1, 2020 to January 1, 2021. The participants were included in the outpatient clinic of the specialized medical services of the HKM-NUHC. Data analysis was done with R 4.1.0 software.

Results: A total of 353 respondents were included in the study. The mean age was 48.9 ± 16.8 with a sex ratio of 0.81. The level of education was at least high school in 82.2%. The agent responsible for COVID-19 and the mode of transmission were not known, respectively, by 31.7% and 89.2% of the participants. Barrier measures were known by 46.2%, while clinical manifestations were known by 89.0%. The level of education was associated with knowledge of COVID-19 ($p < 0.001$).

Conclusions: Findings revealed that good knowledge of the pandemic was related to the level of education. A readjustment of communication strategies towards less educated groups would be recommended.

ID:178

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**INDIRECT VICTIMS OF COVID-19: EFFECT OF CLOSURE OF THE MEDICAL OUTPATIENT SERVICES ON
NON-COVID-19 PATIENTS**

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Background: In order to reduce COVID-19 transmission and protect healthcare workers, the outpatient departments (OPDs) in many hospitals worldwide were closed down in the early days of the pandemic. Patients being managed for chronic medical illnesses who subsequently suffered reduced access to healthcare have been described as “the patients left behind”. The study aimed at assessing the impact of the closure of the Medical OPD of the University of Ilorin Teaching Hospital (UITH) during the government-declared lockdown between March 23, 2020 and June 8, 2020 on the health and perceived well-being of patients with chronic medical illnesses.

Methods: A cross-sectional study of 166 patients with chronic medical illnesses attending the MOPD in UITH.

Results: Mean age of participants was 49.5 ± 18.5 years, 82 (49.4%) were male, median duration of attending MOPD was 24 months (IQR 12-36). 84 patients (50.6%) perceived a negative affectation of their well-being by the closure of MOPD. Being >50 years was associated with a perception of negative affectation of well-being ($P = 0.02$). 130 patients (78.2%) had clinic appointments that fell within the period under review. 61 (69.3%) of the 88 patients who had medical complaints during the period could not reach a doctor and this was associated with a perception of negative affectation of their well-being. The commonest action they took was to do nothing (27.9%), two (3.3%) resorted to herbal concoctions. 49 (29.9%) felt their complaints were urgent.

Conclusions: Our study identifies that patients with chronic medical illness are potential victims of COVID-19 related disruption of healthcare services. Healthcare managers in Nigeria must develop alternatives such as telemedicine that sustain face-to-face medical interaction during eventualities.