

Clinical Research Results Abstract

Abstract ID = 11589

Presented by Norita Hussein on Saturday 06 June 2020

Primary care management of asthma in Malaysia – preliminary findings from the Klang Asthma Cohort Study

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Aim: In Malaysia, asthma is a common but often neglected chronic disease. Achieving good asthma control and optimal asthma care is a challenge in the primary care setting. We aimed to establish an asthma cohort involving six public primary care clinics in the Klang District, Malaysia. We assessed the level of asthma control and asthma care delivered in primary care practice.

Method: All children (aged 5 years and above) and adults with physician-diagnosed asthma or who had been given asthma treatment in the previous year attending the six public primary care clinics were recruited. Assessment of asthma control, use of spirometry at diagnosis, peak flow monitoring, scheduled follow-up visits, prescription of asthma action plan and asthma education were the main indicators for asthma care. Asthma control was assessed according to GINA global guideline 2017.

Results: A total of 1117 patients' data were analysed. 85.7% were adults aged 18 years and above, and 14.2% were between 5 to 17 years old. Our preliminary evaluation demonstrated only 408 (36.5%) were found to have good asthma control, 399 (35.7%) had partly controlled asthma, and 309 (27.7%) had uncontrolled asthma. Other initial findings were: 5.6% had spirometry testing at diagnosis, 72.7% had been followed-up regularly for asthma and 56% had a documented peak expiratory flow rate performed during the last three visits. Although the majority (93.3%) had received some asthma education when asked, only 171 (15.3%) of patients had been given a written asthma action plan. Among those with poorly controlled asthma, only 80% were on an inhaled controller and 68.3% had been reviewed regularly.

Conclusion: Asthma care remains suboptimal and a quality improvement programme in asthma care is needed. In further work, we will determine factors and barriers to achieving improved asthma management.

Declaration of Interest: This research was commissioned by the UK National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Global Health Research Unit on Respiratory Health (RESPIRE), using UK Aid from the UK Government to support global health research.