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QUALITATIVE RESEARCH REPORT

Satisfaction of Nigerian stroke survivors with outpatient physiotherapy care

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ABSTRACT

Objective: To investigate the satisfaction of stroke survivors with outpatient physiotherapy care. **Methods:** Sixty stroke survivors were surveyed using the European Physiotherapy Treatment Outpatient Satisfaction Survey (EPTOPS). Focus group discussion (FGD) was also conducted with four stroke survivors from the same sample. Data were analyzed using the Kruskal Wallis test and Spearman's correlation coefficients at $p = 0.05$. FGD was transcribed and thematically analyzed. **Results:** Nearly all the participants (98.3%) indicated one of good, very good, and excellent improvement in their clinical conditions with physiotherapy. Majority expressed satisfaction with their physiotherapy care, the modal response being very good (59.3%). Patients' satisfaction and socio-demographics were not significantly correlated ($p > 0.05$). Overarching themes from FGD were physiotherapy in stroke rehabilitation, satisfaction with physiotherapy care, cost, and lack of continuity of care as sources of dissatisfaction. Physiotherapists' demeanor was a facilitator of satisfaction. **Conclusion:** The stroke survivors were generally satisfied with outpatient physiotherapy care. However, lack of continuity and cost of care were sources of dissatisfaction among patients. Delivery of physiotherapy to stroke survivors in Nigeria should be structured to allow for continuity of care as this may enhance satisfaction. Implementation of inexpensive rehabilitation strategies may help reduce cost of physiotherapy.

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Physiotherapy; satisfaction with care; stroke survivors

Introduction

Patients' satisfaction with health-care is an important indicator of the quality of health-care services (Ahmad and Din, 2010; Goldwag, Berg, Yuval, and Benbasset, 2002; Gonzalez, Williams, Noel, and Lee, 2005; Shrestha, Dosh, Rao, and Sequeira, 2008). It is both an objective and a consequence of care that affects treatment outcome and compliance with advice (Donabedian, 1988). Patients' satisfaction measures the extent to which general health-care needs and condition-specific needs are met (Asadi-Lari, Tamburini, and Gray, 2004). Evaluating patients' satisfaction is important for the delivery of quality and cost-effective care. This is because it is used to evaluate clinical effectiveness in health-care systems (Porter et al., 2012) and patients' intention to reuse service or recommend to family and friends (Peterson, Charles, DiCenso, and Sword, 2005). Therefore, patients' satisfaction with care is a major interest in most health-care specialties, including physiotherapy.

Stroke is a major public health problem in low- and middle-income countries, including Nigeria (Lopez et al., 2006; Strong, Mathers and Bonita, 2007; Wahab, 2008). Physiotherapy is a key component of stroke

rehabilitation that focuses on the recovery of physical function for the survivors (Aprile et al., 2008; Khan et al., 2012; Salter et al., 2006). It plays a positive role in the prevention of subsequent acute events and enhances independent living through interventions targeted at improving balance, strength, coordination, and function (Mahler et al., 2008). Patients' satisfaction as an important indicator of quality of care has increasingly gained attention in the assessment of stroke outcome (Heuy-Ming and Shake, 2002; Smith et al., 2000). However, patients' satisfaction with physiotherapy care is often overlooked and poorly measured in health-care research (Casserley-Feeney et al., 2008). Meanwhile, evaluating patients' satisfaction may help identify potential areas for service improvement and health expenditure planning (Aharony and Strasser, 1993).

Studies have evaluated the level of satisfaction of clients with physiotherapy care in different health-care settings in different countries (Hossain et al., 2012; Machado and Nogueira, 2008; Stiller, Cains, and Drury, 2009), including Nigeria (Odebiyi, Aiyejusunle, Ojo, and Tella, 2009; Olatunji, Ogunlana, Bello, and Omobaanu, 2008). These studies unanimously reported a high level of satisfaction with physiotherapy care in spite of variations in health-care settings. However,