

Abstract

Background. Knee osteoarthritis (OA) is urgent problem that increases with age [1]. The disease seriously disrupts activity, leads to economic burden and decreases the quality of life (QoL) [2]. More than 16.7% of people over 45 years suffer from it [3]. The role of primary health care providers, in particular general practitioners' (GP) nurses, plays a large role in patient education in rehabilitation skills and disease management [4].

The aim of study was to characterize the competencies of GP nurses used in the observation of patients with knee OA and to assess the effectiveness of enhancing these skills in an outpatient setting.

Main part. Our cross-sectional study included the data of a survey of 86 doctors, 222 nurses assisting GPs and rheumatologists, and 56 patients with terminal knee OA. The statistical processing was performed in SPSS 20.0.

Discussion. We found that less than a third of nurses complete WOMAC and SF-36. The most frequently used competencies were filling out general medical records and pain relief procedures. About 85% of nurses were ready to undergo additional training to master the skills of working with knee OA patients and 61.8% were ready to use SF-36 and WOMAC with their practice. Most doctors were ready to delegate to nurses collecting anamnesis - 37.6%, teaching rehabilitation - 44.7%. At the same time, patients who received regular exercise therapy training and monitoring of the condition by nurses at home demonstrated a higher level of QoL according to SF-36 - MeC = 68.76; PhC = 60.78 and WOMAC - 14.86 ($p < 0.05$ compared with the group of routine management).

Conclusion. The role of nurse in the management of patients with knee OA has a meaning in improving the patients QoL and their rehabilitation. It is necessary to conduct training programs to strengthen the competence of this area.

References

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