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Psycho-social impact of COVID-19 pandemic among Senegalese hemodialysis patients

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Objectives: The objective of this study was to assess the psycho-social impact of COVID-19 in chronic hemodialysis patients in Senegal (West Africa).

Methods: This was a multicenter, prospective, descriptive, and analytical study conducted over a 6 month period from February 1 to June 30, 2020. We have included PHCs for more than 1 month and consenting to participate in the study.

Results: Three hundred and forty-five patients were included. The mean age was 49.67 +/- 14.58 years and sex ratio was 1.14. Eighty-one patients (23.48%) believed COVID-19 was negatively impacting their dialysis treatment. Two hundred and fifty-seven patients (74.49%) perceived themselves to be at risk with 128 patients (37.1%) who were worried about coming on dialysis. Only 109 patients (31.59%) were tested by PCR and 13 (11.92%) were positive. Three hundred and twenty-two patients (93.6%) were informed by TV or radio and 97.97% of patients knew about the preventive barrier measures. Eighty-three patients (24.06%) had difficulty applying these measures mainly during transportation to the dialysis center (18.6%) and at home (73.2%). Wearing a mask was the best-known measure for 331 patients (95.94%). Regarding their professional activity, 49 patients (14.2%) had difficulties related either to transport (49.86%), to correct supply of essential drugs (24.06%), or to carry out routine medical examinations (28.4 %) or surgery for arteriovenous fistula. In bivariate analysis, knowledge of preventive measures was associated with education level ($p < 0.0001$). Perception of the risk of COVID-19 was associated with knowledge of barrier measures ($p = 0.052$) while transport difficulties were associated with socio-professional activity ($p = 0.048$) and level of education ($p = 0.007$).

Conclusions: This study found that COVID-19 pandemic has created anxiety and difficulties in transport, access to essential medicines, and specialized care among hemodialysis patients in Senegal. These results could help adapt COVID-19 prevention and management strategies in dialysis centers.