

Will patients who are returning to work after having a myocardial infarction benefit from attending a nurse led education clinic?

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Abstract

Introduction/Background

In Australia over 69,000 people a year have a myocardial infarction (MI) which equates to approximately 190 MI's per day. Patients discharged from Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital receive this education over 8-10 weeks during which time they access individual advice by phone or face to face; group education classes; and a 6-week exercise program. However, patients who work are only able to take two weeks of sick leave, leaving them unable to access all available services.

Aim/Purpose

All eligible patients will be invited to a nurse led clinic within the two weeks they were off sick and targeted education will be provided.

Methods

All eReferrals admitted to the Coronary Care Unit with MI were screened. Those meeting the inclusion criteria were approached during the admission, informed of the study and invited to receive cardiac rehabilitation education via the post-discharge, nurse-led clinic within the two weeks they were off sick. Inclusion criteria were patients under 65 years, diagnosed with MI, living in metropolitan Perth, and returning to work. Patients completed a pre-post questionnaire to assess the perceived benefit of attending the clinic. Data were collected upon arrival at the clinic (pre) and two weeks later (post).

Results/Outcomes

During the 10 weeks of data collection 14 patients were seen in clinic and 12 undertook the second questionnaire. The results showed that the patients were more aware of their risk factors and managing their heart disease after attending clinic. They had increased their exercise significantly with over 50% doing 30 minutes four times or more a week.

Recommendation's/Conclusions

This younger working patient's cohort indicated a clear preference to receive education in a face to face clinic format within two weeks. Responses to the clinic were positive and suggested that patients felt more informed and motivated to make behavioural changes in the short term. Recommendations are to continue the clinic and undertake further evaluation with a larger sample and longer follow-up.