

Abstract

Background: Due to the increasing life expectancy of people, developing a chronic disease such as CHD is becoming more and more likely. In order to adequately address this increasing load of care, different specialties need to work well together. The study aims to describe the collaboration between different specialties using the instance of general practitioners and cardiologists. It was also investigated, what influences general practitioners' opinions about statements on cardiology care from guidelines, since treatment outcomes can only be optimized if physicians follow evidence-based guidelines and treatments.

Methods: A written survey of general practitioners and cardiologists was conducted. In addition to descriptive data analysis, information exchange between the two disciplines was compared. Correlations and multivariate regression were also calculated to learn what influences general practitioners' opinions regarding statements on cardiology care from the guidelines.

Results: A total of 129 general practitioners and 113 cardiologists participated in the survey. The analysis showed that there are major differences between the disciplines, especially regarding the exchange of information. For instance, cardiologists have almost no contact with nurses in nursing homes, in contrast to general practitioners. The exchange of information among each other should also be more structured, since not all of the important information is always passed on. The regression analysis shows that the general practitioners are hardly influenced in their opinion on statements on cardiology care.

Conclusion: The interaction between general practitioners and cardiologists, but also with other professions, could be shown. It was also demonstrated which information is exchanged between the disciplines and that it is necessary to improve the exchange of information at this point. However, in this study it was not possible to find out the reason why general practitioners or cardiologists do not communicate with other professions. The factors, which influence the individual opinions of the general practitioners about specific statements on cardiology care can only be shown to a limited extent. Therefore, further research is required.

Keywords: primary care, ambulatory cardiology care, information exchange, communication, cooperation, guidelines, cardiovascular diseases, Germany