Abstract

Estimation of Out-of-Pocket Expenditure on COVID-19 Management Among Patients Treated at Home, Iraq, 2020

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Abstract

Background: There is a global consensus that the socioeconomic impact of the COVID-19 crisis has had a substantial effect on health programs and health insurance, with losses of jobs and rising prices causing growing poverty.

Objective: This study aims to estimate the out-of-pocket expenditure spent on the management of patients with COVID-19 exclusively treated at home.

Methods: A cross-sectional study was conducted, and data were collected from participating patients with COVID-19 in Iraq through snowball sampling by using a questionnaire. Enrollment occurred from November 1 to December 31, 2020, and excluded individuals who were entering the hospitals.

Results: Among 589 participating patients with COVID-19, 328 (55.7%) were female. Female patients spent more than male patients to get cured of the illness; the mean amount of money spent by women was statistically higher than men (IQD 644,617 [US $402] and IQD 461,653 [US $307], respectively). The average total money expenditures spent was IQD 643,304 (US $428; range IQD 505,096-5,595,000 [US $336-US $3730]) among patients exclusively treated at home. The average money spent by patients with inadequate monthly income (IQD 901,424 [US $600], range IQD 220,000-5,260,000 [US $140-US $3500]) was significantly more than patients with adequate monthly income (IQD 613,252 [US $400], range IQD 48,000-5,500,000 [US $32-US $3600]). Patients with COVID-19 (25.5%) who had chronic diseases spent significantly more money (IQD 696,330 [US $460]) than those without the chronic disease (IQD 625,185 [US $416]).

Conclusions: Financial burdens affected the purchasing power and the economic situation on the management of patients with COVID-19 exclusively treated at home.

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KEYWORDS
poverty; out-of-pocket expenditure; chronic diseases; cross-section study