

Research Paper

Challenges Related to Treatment/Care of Patients With COVID-19 Hospitalized in Forghani Hospital in Qom, Iran: A Qualitative Study




Zohre Khalajinia¹, Monireh Mirzaie², Reza Heidarifar³, *Sarallah Shojaei⁴, Fatemeh Dehghani⁵

1. Department of Midwifery, School of Medicine, Qom University of Medical Science, Qom, Iran.
2. Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, School of Medicine, Qom University of Medical Sciences, Qom, Iran.
3. Clinical Research Development Center, Nekoui-Farghani Hospital (Khairin Salam), Qom University of Medical Sciences, Qom, Iran.
4. Department of Nursing, School of Nursing and Midwifery, Qom University of Medical Sciences, Qom, Iran.
5. Spiritual Health Research Center, School of Health and Religion, Qom University of Medical Sciences, Qom, Iran.



Citation Khalajinia Z, Mirzaie M, Heidarifar R, Shojaei S, Dehghani F. [Challenges Related to Treatment/Care of Patients with COVID-19 Hospitalized in Forghani Hospital in Qom, Iran: A Qualitative Study (Persian)]. *Qom Univ Med Sci J.* 2023; 16(12):954-967. <https://doi.org/10.32598/qums.16.12.47.14>

 <https://doi.org/10.32598/qums.16.12.47.14>



Received: 28 Sep 2022

Accepted: 16 Jan 2023

Available Online: 01 Mar 2023

Keywords:

Qualitative research,
Patients, COVID-19

ABSTRACT

Background and Objectives The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic caused a crisis in health care systems such that the treatment/care of patients 19 faced big challenges. This study aims to investigate the challenges related to treatment/care of patients hospitalized in Forghani Hospital in Qom, Iran.

Methods This study was conducted using the qualitative content analysis approach in 2020 Forghani Hospital in Qom, Iran. Eleven patients with COVID-19 were selected using a purposive sampling method. Data collection tool was in-depth semi-structured interview. Data analysis was done using the conventional content analysis method.

Results The results of content analysis led to identification of three main themes including lack of disease knowledge, human recourse and equipment shortage, and individual-family and social concerns.

Conclusion Hospitalized patients with COVID-19 in Qom face various challenges due to the unknown etiology of the disease, lack of experience and sufficient medical staff, and personal and family concerns. Therefore, it is recommended to make proper planning for the management and control of pandemics in the future.

* Corresponding Author:

Sarallah Shojaei

Address: Department of Nursing, School of Nursing and Midwifery, Qom University of Medical Sciences, Qom, Iran.

Tel: +98 (912) 4528115

Email: sshojaee@muq.ac.ir



Copyright © 2023 Qom University of Medical Sciences.
This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>).
Noncommercial uses of the work are permitted, provided the original work is properly cited.

Extended Abstract

Introduction

Coronaviruses are one of the pathogens that affect the respiratory system in humans. They are a large family of viruses which cause diseases ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as severe acute respiratory syndrome and Middle East respiratory syndrome. In December 2019, a novel case of pneumonia with unknown etiology was reported in Wuhan, China for which vaccines and treatments were not effective and was later named COVID-19. It makes the patients face different challenges due to its unknown etiology, lack of sufficient experience in dealing with it, and unknown patient needs. For recovery, patients are needed to pay attention to different dimensions of health and coordination between them. The disease also made the healthcare system face new challenges and problems due to being novel, virus's high power of transmission, and its unknown treatment method. Since no study has been conducted in Iran to scientifically explore the challenges caused by COVID-19 and given that the prognosis of the disease in different patients is unknown, this qualitative study aims to investigate the challenges related to treatment/care of hospitalized patients with COVID-19 in Qom, Iran.

Methods

This study was done using the qualitative content analysis approach in 2020. Participants were 11 patients with COVID-19 hospitalized at Forghani Hospital affiliated to [Qom University of Medical Sciences](#) who were selected by a purposive sampling method. They were different in terms of age, gender, length of hospital stay, having/not having underlying diseases, smoking/not smoking. Inclusion criteria were diagnosis with COVID-19 by a physician and hospitalization for at least three days. The method used for data collection was in-depth semi-structured interview. The interview was started with the following questions: What are the treatment challenges in this hospital? What are the nursing care challenges in this hospital? As a COVID-19 patient, what are your experiences of hospitalization in this hospital? Fifteen interviews were done with 11 patients. The interviews lasted for 30-45 minutes depending on the severity of the disease. The interviews were repeated if needed. The interviews were transcribed and read carefully. The information obtained from the participants was analyzed by the conventional content analysis method. Important sentences and phrases were identified and underlined. After coding, similar codes were put in one category.

Results

The mean length of hospital stay in patients was 8 days, and 3 patients had underlying diseases (diabetes and hypertension). They were all married. Three main themes were extracted including unknown disease (lack of knowledge of disease transmission and prevention, lack of knowledge of disease complications, lack of a definitive treatment method or vaccine), human resources and equipment (shortages/fatigue of nurses and doctors, lack of space, insufficient services), and individual-family and social concerns (Fear of death, stigma, fear of infection in family members).

The factors in the first category can cause fear, anxiety and restlessness in patients which can affect their physical and mental health and delay their recovery. Based on the second category, lack of nursing staff and physicians was one of the major challenges that hospitals faced during the COVID-19 outbreak. A number of nurses (themselves or their families) contracted the disease and left the service cycle, which doubled the workload. One of the important concerns of hospitalized patients was fear of death, especially in the elderly with underlying diseases.

Discussion

Hospitalized patients with COVID-19 in Qom face various challenges due to the unknown etiology of the disease, lack of experience, shortage of medical staff, and personal and family concerns. Therefore, it is recommended to make proper planning for the management and control of pandemics in the future.

Ethical Considerations

Compliance with ethical guidelines

This study was approved by the ethics committee of [Qom University of Medical Sciences](#) (Code: IR.MUQ.REC.1399.125).

Funding

This study was funded by [Qom University of Medical Sciences](#) (Grant No.: 991187).

Authors contributions

All authors contributed equally in preparing all parts of the research.

Conflicts of interest

The authors declared no conflict of interest.

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank the personnel of Forghani Hospital, the deputy for research of [Qom University of Medical Sciences](#), and all participants for their cooperation.