

Post COVID-19 infection: Impact of demography and symptom persistence on functional outcome post hospitalization

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Post-COVID-19 syndrome has emerged as we learn more about COVID-19 but its influence on patient well-being after discharge is not well researched. The study examined the impact of demography and symptom persistence on functional outcome post hospitalization. **Methods:** A single-centre, cross-sectional study was conducted via retrospective review of medical records of patients who attended the post-COVID-19 clinic follow-up from September 2020 until August 2021. Associating factors with functional status was analysed using logistic regression. **Results:** The mean age of 201 patients was 55 (SD: 14.1) years old, with population match ethnic proportions and equal gender distribution. Most were diagnosed with COVID-19 Stage 3 or higher. Hypertension (57.1%) and diabetes (39.1%) were the common comorbidities. Cough (59.3%), dyspnoea (43.3%), and fever (42.5%) were the most prevalent hospitalization symptoms, while malaise (21.0%), dyspnoea (17.8%), and cough (17.4%) were the most common post-discharge symptoms. Slightly less than half (46.6%) had poor functional outcome. Patients with malaise [AOR: 4.76 (95% CI: 1.89, 12.02), $p=0.001$] and cough [AOR: 2.97 (95% CI: 1.17, 7.55), $p=0.022$] had higher odds of poor functional outcome. Twenty-three patients sought treatment for persistent symptoms, but only three contacted the COVID team for advice. **Conclusion:** Persistent symptoms like malaise and cough which was associated with poorer functional outcomes alongside low health-seeking behaviour implying a lack of knowledge about the impact of symptom persistence on their quality of life. This serves as a guide for patient's education on recovery and future follow-up plans in the post-COVID-19 clinic.