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RECOVER Work Package 2 and the national coordinating team

Extended Point Prevalence Audit Survey (PPAS)

Results for the Netherlands





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Extended PPAS the Netherlands

General information

The point prevalence audit survey (PPAS) was initiated in January 2020 in 18 European countries to capture information with respect to antibiotic prescribing and diagnostic testing for patients presenting in primary care with symptoms of an acute respiratory tract infection. The anonymous registration of patients' characteristics, signs and symptoms, physical examination results and the management of general practitioners with respect to diagnostic testing, prescribing of antibiotics and other medicines, and provided self-care advice was very smoothly implemented in about 125 primary care practices throughout Europe.

This first PPAS was nearly finished when the COVID-19 pandemic hit Europe. Given the success of the PPAS, it was decided to extend the initial survey with COVID-19 specific items. Running this extended PPAS throughout Europe will provide information of how patients with respiratory tract infection are managed during the pandemic, what medicines are prescribed and advice provided, and will reveal marked differences between countries with respect to patient management.

Country information

- Country: THE NETHERLANDS
- Registration period: 23 March 2020 to 28 April 2020
- Total number of patient consultations: 242

Additional remarks from interview study with GPs and patients:

- Clinicians report that initially there were a lot of telephone consultations but they still did some face to face visits, they are slowly setting up video consultations. They have not been overburdened with work and practice has been quieter than usual.
- Initially there was a shortness of protective equipment
- Clinicians have rapidly needed to learn new ways of working, dealing with, new case definitions and new daily guidance and new evidence, which has sometimes been conflicting.
- The regional crisis team collected information and made it available to practices, however in the initial phase of the pandemic the information was too technical and not practical.
- There has been a lot of flexibility from practice staff and colleagues within and across practices sharing tips, providing informal training and information to keep each other updated
- Patients are very understanding and grateful for care given by GPs but some still do not feel comfortable consulting because of the risk of catching COVID. Clinicians are concerned about managing those with chronic conditions who have postponed consulting.

Additional remarks on data below:

- Only 17% of patients were actually seen at the practice, the others were contacted by telephone
- Half of the patients had a chronic condition
- 60% of patients had mild symptoms

- In 30% an addition test was ordered, of whom 72% a CRP and 28% a COVID test
- In half of the patients COVID was suspected, of whom 13% did get antibiotic treatment
- The vast majority of patients did get advice on home isolation and preventive measures
- Only 5.4% of patients were referred to hospital



Consultation (N=242)				
Consultation at	Practice	16.8%		
	Home	8.7%		
	Protective measures: yes	88.5%	apron/body protection	94.4%*
			face, nose/mouth protection	98.1%
			safety glasses	96.3%
			gloves	100%
	Telephone	71.9%		
Video/skype	2.1%			
Has patient already been tested for COVID?	Yes	7.0%	Result:	
			Positive	47.1%*
			Negative	41.2%
			Unknown	11.8%
	No	93.0%		
Patient characteristics				
Age	Median (IQR)	52 (35-67)		
Comorbidity	Yes	49.2%	chronic respiratory condition	45.4%*
			diabetes	16.8%
			cardiovascular disease	32.8%
Measured:				
Fever	Yes	75.4% ^{''}	Temp ≥38 or <36	25.0%*
O ₂	Yes	85.2% ^{''}	Saturation <96%	42.4%*
Resp. rate	Yes	55.7% ^{''}	Resp. rate >20 or <12	7.0% [^]
Signs and symptoms				
Rhinitis	Yes	38.4%		
Sore throat	Yes	33.9%		
Cough	Yes	82.2%	short of breath (dyspnoea)	47.9%#
			abnormal auscultation	23.0% ^{''}
			(pleuritic) chest pain	18.2%#
			tachypnoea	10.7%#
General symptoms	Yes	68.4%	headache	22.3%#
			altered mental status	1.7%

			fatigue	41.7%
			diarrhoea	4.5%
Overall illness severity	Mild	59.9%		
	Moderate	30.2%		
	Severe	7.9%		
Confidence in assessment of the patient's condition	Very confident	15.7%	Very confident	15.9% [§]
	Confident	63.2%	Confident	65.5% [§]
	Moderately	17.7%	Moderately	16.8% [§]
	Unconfident	1.7%	Unconfident	1.8% [§]
Additional diagnostic tests	Yes	29.5% [”]	CRP	72.2%*
			CRP Median (IQR)	45 (14-96)
			COVID-19 test	27.8%
			Total white blood cell count	0.0%
			Chest X-ray	0.0%
Suspected aetiology	viral (no COVID-19)			41.3%
	COVID-19			50.0%
	bacterial			5.0%
	allergic			1.2%
	not clear			15.7%
Initial working diagnosis	acute pharyngitis/tonsillitis/abscess		2.5%	
	laryngitis/laryngotracheitis		0.0%	
	influenza-like-illness		2.1%	
	bronchiolitis		0.0%	
	acute bronchitis		1.7%	
	CAP		3.3%	
	exacerbation COPD/asthma		7.9%	
	upper RTI		39.3%	
	COVID-19		47.9%	
			Contacted public health authorities?	7.8%*
Would you recommend testing?			30.2%	
GP provided	advice for home isolation	69.8%	how many days? Median	14 (12-14)

	advice for symptomatic treatment	50.0%	(ICQ)	
	a scheduled follow-up visit/call	25.2%		
	prescribed medication	28.9%	inhaled medication	11.2%#
			antibiotic	12.8%
			antiviral medication	0.0%
			antihistamines	0.8%
	advice for family members	52.5%	home isolation	34.7%#
			social distancing	38.8%
			other	0.4%
	preventive measures for patient	54.1%	extra handwashing	41.7%#
			sneezing in sleeve	39.3%
			social distancing	48.3%
			nose/mouth protection	4.5%
			staying in separate room	21.1%
	where to find reliable information	24.8%		
GP prescribed	Antibiotics if working diagnose was COVID-19		Yes	12.9%
Confidence that provided advice/treatment will benefit this patient	Very confident	5.8%	Very confident	6.4% [§]
	Confident	56.2%	Confident	60.9% [§]
	Moderately	27.7%	Moderately	28.2% [§]
	Unconfident	5.0%	Unconfident	4.5% [§]
	Very unconfident	0%	Very unconfident	0.0% [§]
	Referral to hospital	5.4%		
	Advise contact/refer to COVID-specific authority	7.0%		

* percentage from yes

" percentage from F2F contact

percentage from total (n=240)

^ percentage from adults and yes

§ if suspected etiology is COVID-19

