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v i r t u a l

Treatment for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease prior to early permanent detachment from the workforce

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Introduction

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) patients are vulnerable to early retirement from the workforce.

Aims

The aim is to investigate whether COPD patients have received treatment for COPD prior to detachment from the workforce and how long they were treated before leaving the workforce.

Method

This nationwide Danish epidemiologic study includes patients, 35-64 years old, at the time of first admission to the hospital with an exacerbation of COPD between 1999 to 2015. Registry data on prescriptions were available from 1995. Patients with detachment prior to 1996 were therefore excluded. Patients receiving early retirement (including early retirement and early voluntary retirement benefit (available from the age of 60)) at first admission were included in the study. Date of first early retirement benefit and first prescription of inhaled airway medication (INHA) (long or short acting adrenergic agonists, long or short acting anticholinergic and inhaled corticosteroids) were registered. Time from first prescription to detachment was calculated in patients receiving airway medication prior to detachment.

Results

A total of 8,392 COPD patients, 52% females, were included in the study. The median age was 60 years at first admission. A total of 4,795(57%) had received (INHA) before early retirement, with a median time from first prescription to early retirement of 1,529 days, interquartile range (679–2.806 days).

Conclusion

Half of COPD patients received INHA with a median time of first prescription more than four years before detachment from the workforce. Early actions to maintain COPD patients' workforce connection including treatment optimization should be considered.