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CHR D 2020: Abstract Submission Form

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Title

Follow-up of children who undergo an uncomplicated surgical procedure: a caregiver survey to determine satisfaction, family impact and preferences for alternate follow-up

Background

Historically all surgical patients underwent a postoperative in-person follow-up (IPFU); this may not be necessary after certain uncomplicated surgical procedures. Patients treated in Winnipeg may travel long distances for IPFU. The impact is significant including time off work/school, childcare arrangements and the cost of travel.

Objective

We hypothesized that many caregivers would prefer an alternate follow-up (AFU) in place of an IPFU.

Methods

We surveyed caregivers of children less than 16 years of age who underwent a simple appendectomy, pyloromyotomy, cholecystectomy, or repair of an inguinal or umbilical hernia. With REB approval and caregiver consent, surveys were completed in-person for patients at an IPU at the Winnipeg Children's Hospital or over the telephone for caregivers with an AFU.

Results

The study began in Fall 2019 but was interrupted due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Eleven surveys were completed (4 IPFU, 7 AFU). Most caregivers surveyed were mothers (10/11) and resided within Winnipeg (6/11). The most inconvenient factors for IPFU were finding parking, gas and parking costs, arrangements for childcare and time off work. Less emphasis was placed on taking the child out of school or stress to the child. The estimated cost of an IPFU was 20-1000CAD (5 survey responses). Caregivers noted that follow-up is important to ask questions and ensure their child is healing well. IPFUs often had significant wait times; 3/4 of IPFU caregivers surveyed would have preferred an AFU. The majority (6/7) of AFU caregivers were satisfied with their AFU, including 3/6 preferring an IPU but with their

local family physician.

Conclusion

Our preliminary pre-COVID-19 results support caregivers' preferences for avoiding inconveniences associated with an IPFU. Ironically, the pandemic has resulted in a rapid transition to AFU, often via telephone or video. A modified survey for satisfaction of the current virtual follow-ups could explore how to further enhance virtual patient care.

Theme:

Clinical

Do you have a table/figure to upload?

No

Are you willing to participate in Goodbear's Den?

Yes

Presenter Status:

Non-Trainee

What was your role in the project?

Supervisor of NP

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