

## Cardiac Rehabilitation for Heart Failure patients – A service long overdue

Lisa Buttigieg, Mark Abela, Joanne Vella, Jeanine Micallef, Raissa Abela, Marilyn Gauci, Josette Desira, Sheldon Attard, Janet Caruana, Alice May Moore, Robert G Xuereb

### AIM

Evidence supporting a multi-disciplinary approach in the management of heart failure [HF] patients is substantial. Exercise training [ET] sessions for HF patients are now available locally as of 2018. This study aimed to look at patient satisfaction in those referred to the program, whilst also looking at a number of health outcomes.

### Methodology

Cardiovascular Information System [CVIS] and Isoft software were used for demographic, clinical and biochemical data collection. A telephone-based interview was used for data collection with respect to patient satisfaction and NYHA class and the KCCQ12 questionnaire after completing the program.

### Results

In total, 26 HF patients were referred, with a mean Ejection Fraction  $36.19 \pm 9.1\%$  and a mean age of  $62 \pm 9.2$  years. The majority were male [62%], suffering from ischaemic cardiomyopathy [54%]. The majority of those attending were NYHA 2 [47%]. To date, 15 subjects completed the program, with 47% of these attending all 12 ET sessions [Median 11]. There was a significant improvement in NYHA class at the end of the program [ $p=0.05$ ]. By the end of the program, 33% took up exercise more frequently [ $p=0.132$ ], which did not seem more likely in those who adhered more to ET sessions [ $p=0.89$ ] and had higher NYHA class [ $p=0.67$ ]. There was no statistical difference in NT-proBNP levels before and after ET sessions [ $p=0.480$ ]. The majority [73%] felt that the program exceeded their expectation, 67% were very satisfied with the programme and 93% reported they felt better.

## Discussion

ET sessions for heart failure patients have been beneficial as observed with the above results, with significant improvement in NYHA class.

## Conclusion

HF patients attending ET sessions were extremely satisfied and had a significant improvement in NYHA class.