

Unmet care needs of older patients with maxillofacial diseases: A cross-sectional study

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Introduction

Recognizing and addressing unmet care needs is essential for enhancing the quality of healthcare and social support. For patients with maxillofacial diseases who often face complex physical, emotional, and functional challenges, these unmet needs can significantly impact their recovery, well-being, and quality of life. Despite the unique vulnerabilities of this patient group, current research in Slovakia remains limited, particularly concerning their specific care requirements.

Aim

The aim of this study is to investigate the prevalence and patterns of unmet care needs among hospitalized patients with maxillofacial diseases, and to identify the factors that contribute to the presence of these unmet needs within this specific patient population.

Methods

Data were collected between April and October 2024 using the Camberwell Assessment of Need Short Appraisal Schedule-Patient (CANSAS-P), 2nd edition. The sample included 100 patients aged over 60, hospitalized in a selected department of maxillofacial surgery.

Results

The most common unmet needs were related to sexuality (39.0%), intimate relationships (33.0%), and finances (46.0%). These were significantly influenced by age, perceived health status, presence of chronic disease, hearing impairments, mobility limitations, difficulty swallowing liquids, insertion of a nasogastric tube or percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy, breathing difficulties, and impaired verbal communication ($p \leq 0.05$).

Conclusion

The findings of the study revealed that unmet needs are frequently present among patients hospitalized in the maxillofacial surgery department and are shaped by various factors. These results underscore the necessity of adopting a personalized approach in nursing care, tailored to the individual circumstances of each patient. From a clinical perspective, the study highlights the urgent need to strengthen nursing interventions that proactively address these unmet needs, thereby enhancing patient outcomes and satisfaction with care.