CORRESPONDENCE

Home Telemonitoring in Patients With Chronic Heart Failure: A Chance to Improve Patient Care?

by Prof. Dr. phil. Silke Schmidt, Prof. Dr. med. Andreas Schuchert, Dipl.-Psych. Thomas Krieg, Prof. Dr. med. Michael Oeff in Heft 8/2010

Prof. Dr. med. Martin Middeke
Hypertoniezentrum München
Dienerstraße 12
80331 München
martin.middeke@gmx.de

Dr. med. Dipl.-Phys. Stefan Kottmair
Rosenheimerstraße 116a
81669 München

Important Study Should Have Been Considered

In addition to the article by Schmidt et al (1) we would like to point out that the first and so far only controlled study on this subject was published in Germany in 2007 (2). Our study included 502 patients and is one of the largest investigations on telemedically supported healthcare services in patients with chronic heart failure.

Mortality data from our study were used for calculating effect sizes in a 2009 review article in the renowned Journal of the American College of Cardiology (3).

Analysis of our data by intention to treat confirmed a significant drop in mortality (24.9% versus 32.5%, $P=0.007$) and a significant reduction in hospital days (by 37.5, $P/0.025$) in the intervention group (telemonitoring and telecoaching) compared with conventional care after 24 months. These results were presented at the 2009 fall meeting of the German Society of Cardiology (4).

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In Reply:

Our article related primarily to meta-analyses. Original articles were used mainly for the purpose of demonstrating specific substantial findings.

The manuscript was accepted for publication on 6 September 2009; at this time we were not yet aware of the study presented by Middeke and Kottmair at the fall meeting. Further, posters cannot be included in a publication.

However, we were able to include this very important study in the context of a more recent and more specific review article that included original articles. We are currently working on the manuscript and would welcome further information about a possibly published original article relating to the published poster.

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- Schmidt S, Schuchert A, Krieg T, Oeff M: Home telemonitoring in patients with chronic heart failure: A chance to improve patient care? Dtsch Arztebl Int 2010; 107(8): 131–8.

Prof. Dr. phil. Silke Schmidt
Gesundheit und Prävention
Ernst-Moritz-Arndt Universität Greifswald
Institut für Psychologie
Robert-Blum-Straße 13
17487 Greifswald
silke.schmidt@uni-greifswald.de

Conflict of interest statement

The authors of all contributions declare that no conflict of interest exists according to the guidelines of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors.